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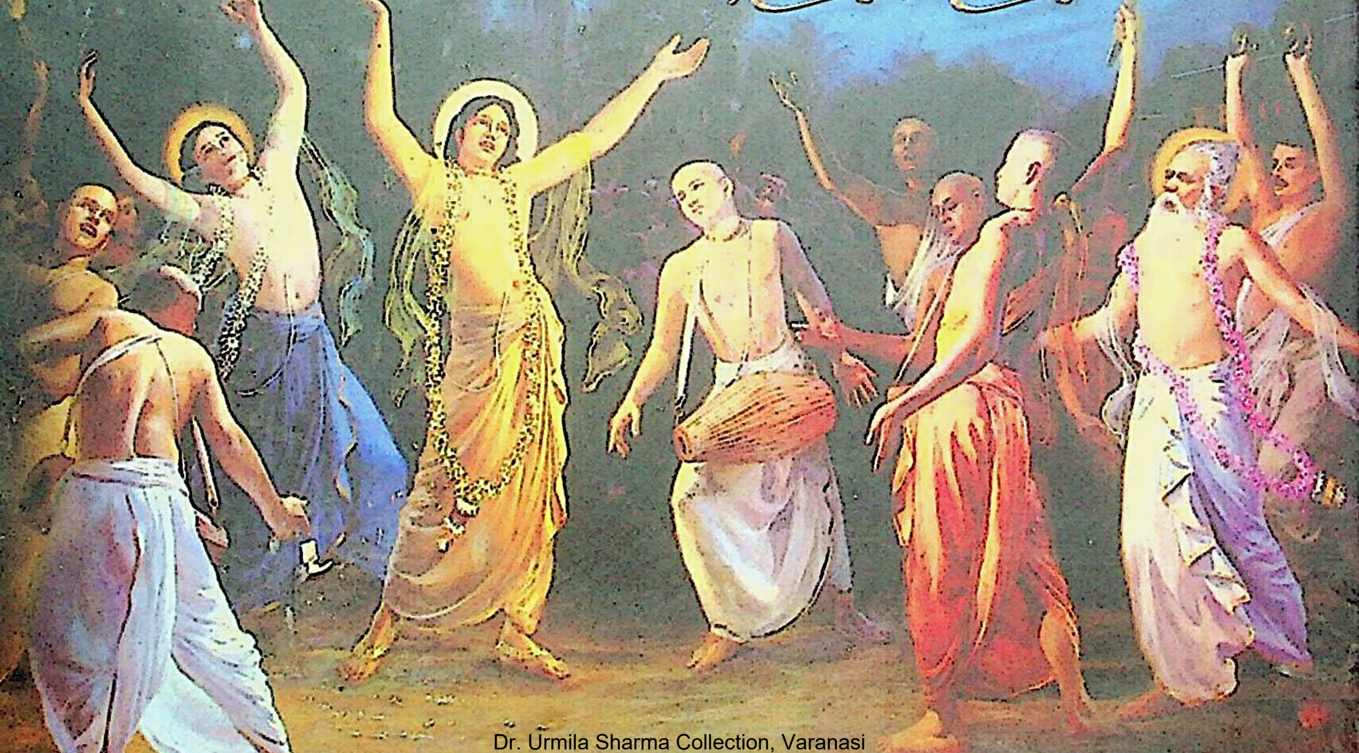
ŚRĪ NAVADVIPA PARIKRAMA

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami



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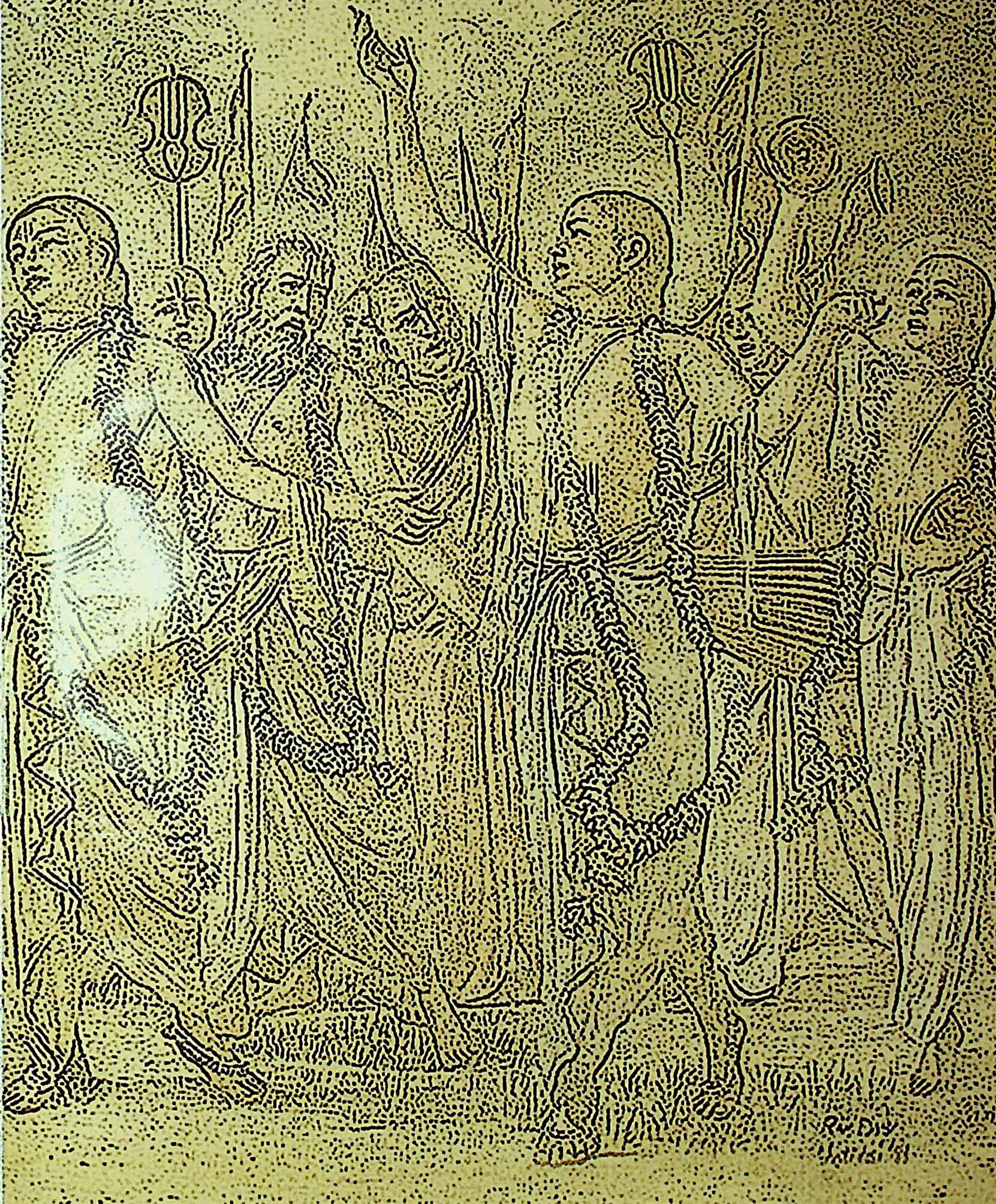
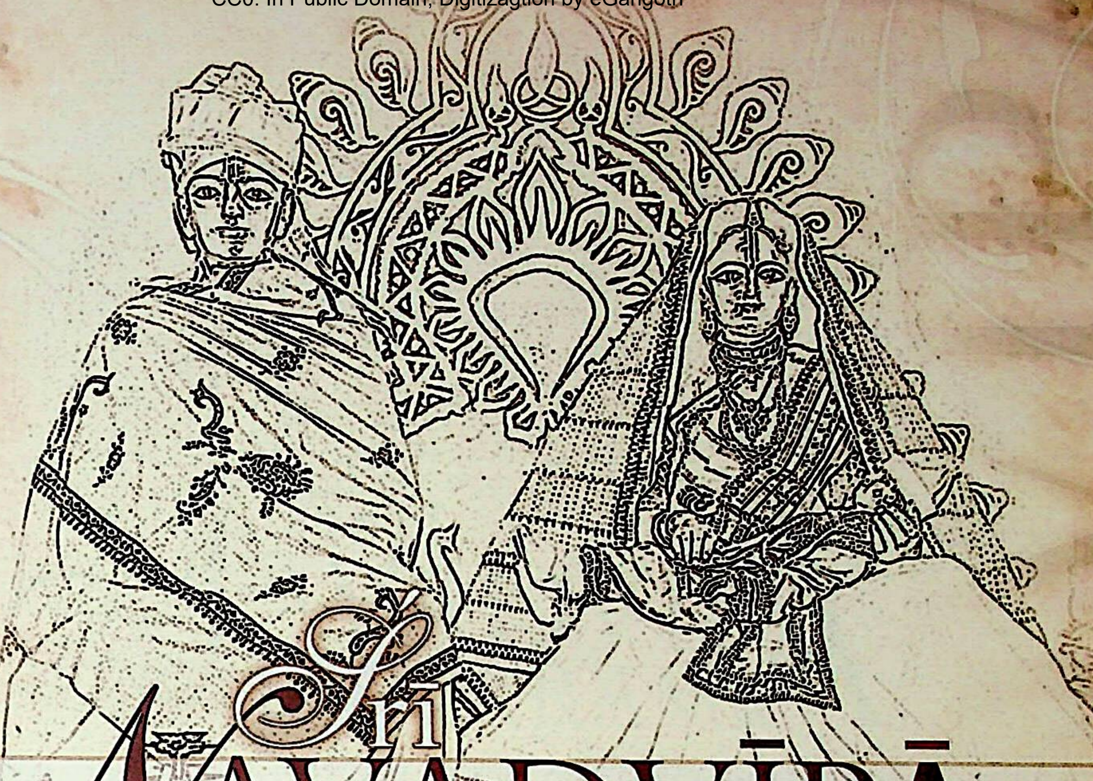
Resembling an eight-petalled lotus in shape, this abode is immaculately pure. It is so cooling that it defeats the illumination of millions of moons. It is so brilliant that it defeats the effulgence of millions of suns. Sometimes that dhama will appear before my eyes.

MAYAPUR
MEDIA

52 52





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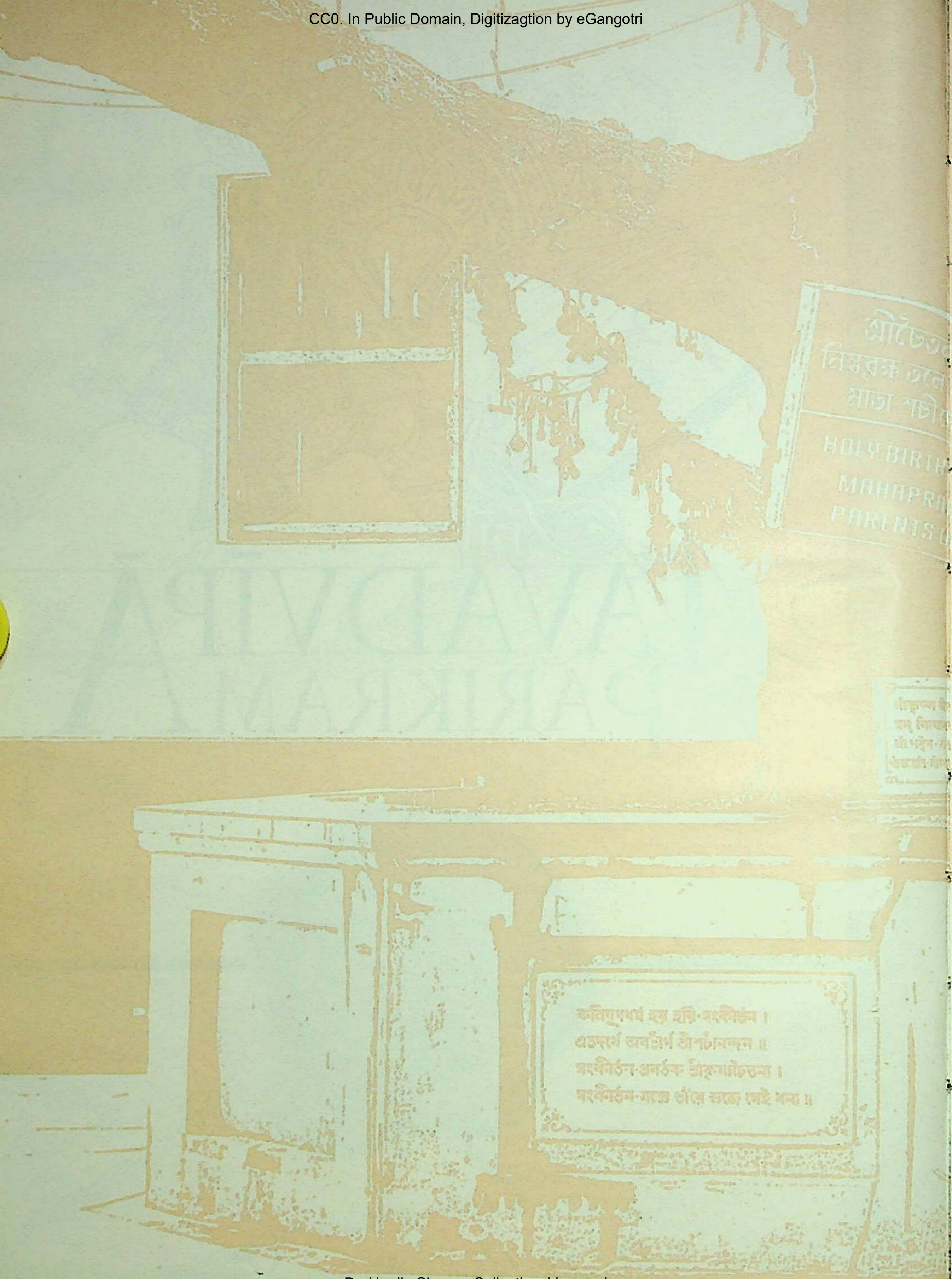
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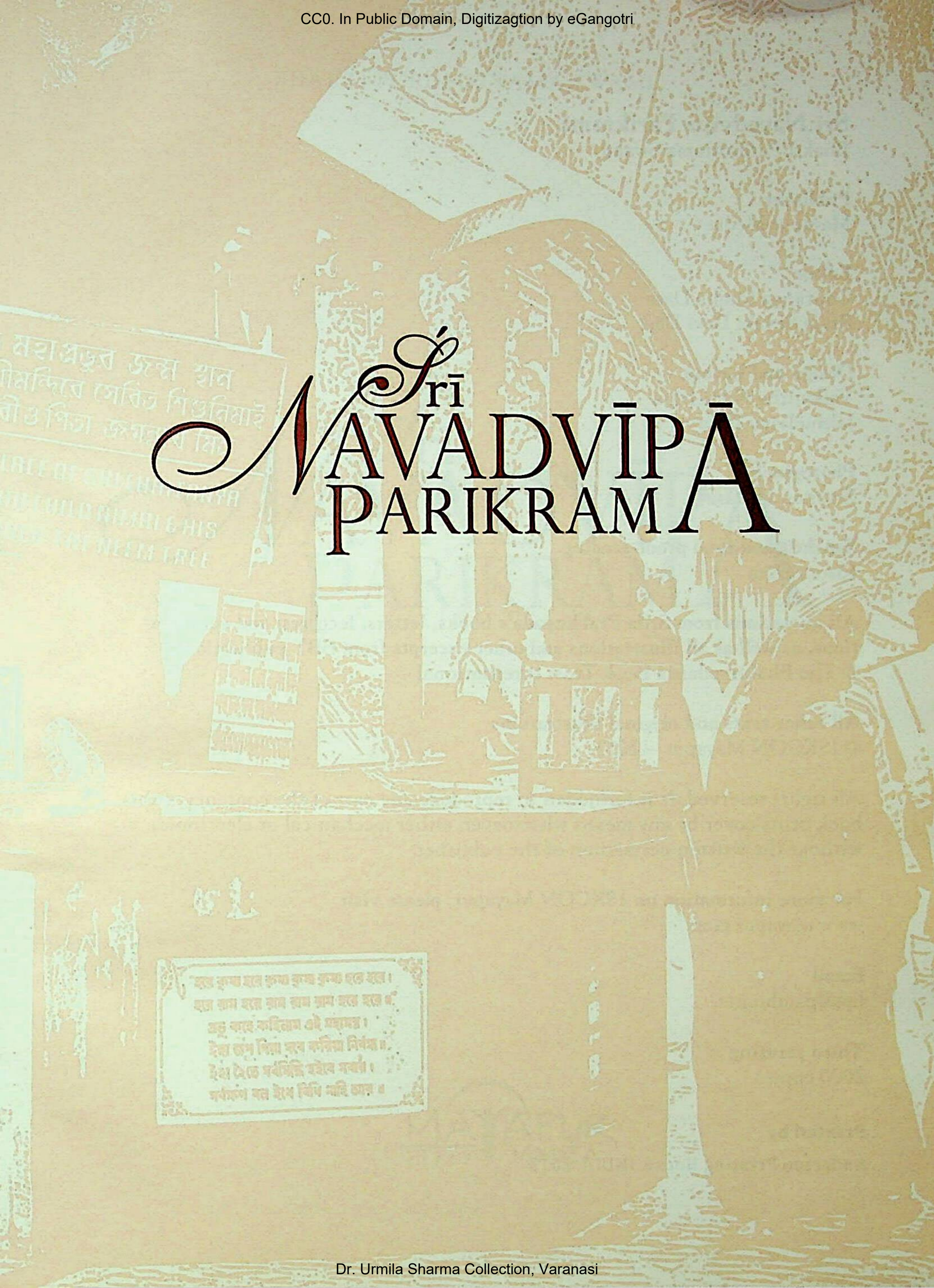

Śrī
NAVADVĪPA
PARIKRAMĀ

Śrī Navadvīpa Parikramā
Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

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BHAKTI PURUṢOTTAMA SWAMI

ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA PARIKRAMĀ

MAYAPUR MEDIA

DEDICATION

This book Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā is dedicated to His Divine Grace Abhaya Caraṇāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda who has brought this most holy place to the knowledge of the people of the entire world.

I also offer this book unto the lotus hand of my spiritual master, His Holiness Jayapataka Swami Mahārāja, who carries Navadvīpa-dhāma within his heart all over the world, wherever he goes.

May the countless devotees visiting this most holy Navadvīpa-dhāma derive pleasure by reading this book and give me their blessings so that I may develop pure love for the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda.

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PREFACE

gauro bhraman yatra hariḥ sva-bhaktaiḥ
saṅkīrtana-prema-bhareṇa sarvam
nimajjayaty ujjvala-bhāva-sindhau
taṁ śrī-navadvīpam ahaṁ smarāmi

"I meditate on Navadvīpa-dhāma, where Gaurāṅga would wander along with His devotees. Filled with *prema* generated from their *kīrtana*, they would drown everyone in the ocean of love of Kṛṣṇa."

(Śrī Navadvīpaṣṭaka, By Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī)

The glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma are hidden, even from the demigods. We know that Brahmā is the creator of this universe, yet he is not the original creator. Initially every element was created by Viṣṇu. Thus Viṣṇu is the Primary creator, but even Viṣṇu cannot create without the desire and sanction of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

tumi sarveśvareśvara, brajendra-kumāra
tomāra icchāya viśve sṛjana saṁhāra
tava icchā-mato brahmā korena sṛjana
tava icchā-mato viṣṇu korena pālana

"You, son of Nanda Mahārāja, are the controller of all controllers. By Your desire only this cosmic manifestation comes to existence and also gets annihilated. By Your desire only Brahmā creates and Viṣṇu maintains."

(Śaraṇāgati by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Third Principle of Surrender, Song 4)

Thus Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is behind the creation of everything, with only one exception. That is Navadvīpa-dhāma. Navadvīpa-dhāma was not created by the desire of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This *dhāma* was created by the desire of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the story of which is described in "The Appearance of Navadvīpa-dhāma" in this book.

By the mercy of Lord Jagannātha, a book on Śrī Kṣetra-parikramā has been published. Devotees around the world inform me how much they have been enjoying reading the description of Śrī Kṣetra and thus how much they have benefited. By hearing this I felt very encouraged to share with the devotees the glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma as well. Included in the book are descriptions of the pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga in Navadvīpa before His actual appearance. During these pre-appearance pastimes the Lord appeared to various demigods like Brahmā and Indra and to different *ṛṣis* and devotees. The descriptions of these pastimes are mentioned in *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and *Bhakti-ratnākara* by Narahari Cakravartī. I have tried my best to translate these descriptions into English in this book. There are also many pastimes Lord Gaurāṅga performed in Navadvīpa-dhāma during His manifested period on this earth planet around 500 years ago. These pastimes are recorded in many books, among which *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Śrī Caitanya-maṅgala* are the most prominent and widely read by devotees. I have not mentioned these pastimes very much in this book fearing the size of the book would be too big. Moreover these pastimes are available in the respective books. If Lord Gaurāṅga desires, we may publish a compilation of the descriptions of the pastimes of the Lord in Navadvīpa from the various scriptures in the future.

In this particular book, the main subject matter has been taken from *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, *Bhakti-ratnākara* and *Navadvīpa- bhāva-taraṅga*. The information on most of the temples and holy places as well as the directions on how to get there have come from "*Gauradesa, A Devotional Guide to Navadvipa-Dhama*" written by Manjari Devī Dāsī.

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura has stated in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*:

adyāpīha se līlā kare gaura rāya
kona kona bhāgyavān dekhibāre pāya
prabhura śrī dhāma, bhakti, nitya-parikara
ithe anya mata yāra, seita pāmara

"Even now Śrī Gaura Rāya is performing His pastimes, which only the most fortunate can see. There is no difference between the Lord's *śrī-dhāma*, *bhakti* and His eternal associates. One who has a different opinion about this is most fallen."

Mahāprabhu's pastimes are taking place in Navadvīpa eternally. Before His appearance, during His appearance and after His disappearance.
Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has stated,

śrī-gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, yebā jāne cintāmaṇi,
tāra haya vraja-bhūme vāsa

"One who knows that Gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, the abode of Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, is transcendental, is qualified to live in Vraja-bhūmi."
Śrī Narahari Dāsa has stated:

navadvīpa vṛndāvana dui eke haya
gaura-śyāma-rūpe prabhu sadā vilasaye

"Navadvīpa and Vṛndāvana are one and the same. The Lord is eternally enjoying in both forms at both places as Gaura (golden) and Śyāma (black) respectively."

Some of the exact locations of the Lord's pastime places are not known to us. There are different opinions about which island they are situated on. Just as in the case of Samudragarh and Campahaṭṭi. Some say these two places are located in Koladvīpa and others say they are located in Ṛtudvīpa. In a similar way the exact location of Śrīdhara Āṅgana and few other places is also not clear.

The locations of some places described in this book are not known at all. Due to the movement of the Gaṅgā they have disappeared. Some places which were located on the western side of the Gaṅgā have moved to the eastern side and vice versa.

This book is not a practical guide book with detailed information about how to find different places and which deities are in which temples etc. I have mainly described the various pre-appearance pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. If a small book containing detailed guide information about Navadvīpa-dhāma can be published it will be very helpful to the visiting devotees. I have earnestly requested my god-brother, His Grace Vrajanātha Prabhu, to do this job. He is now serving in the Dhāma Sevak Department in Māyāpur, taking care of all the visiting devotees. He regularly takes devotees around Navadvīpa-dhāma to the many pilgrimage places and thus has much experience. I hope this book will manifest some day by the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

Finally I beg forgiveness from all the devotees, so they may excuse me for any mistakes I have made in this book. I am very apprehensive in publishing this offering. My fear is that I must have made some errors in presenting the words and views of the previous great *ācāryas* from whose writings I have collected the subject matter of this book. I sincerely pray at the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura to forgive me for any mistakes I might have made due to the deficit of my understanding or my inadequacy in expressing the subject matter.

Please bless me and forgive me for all my offenses.

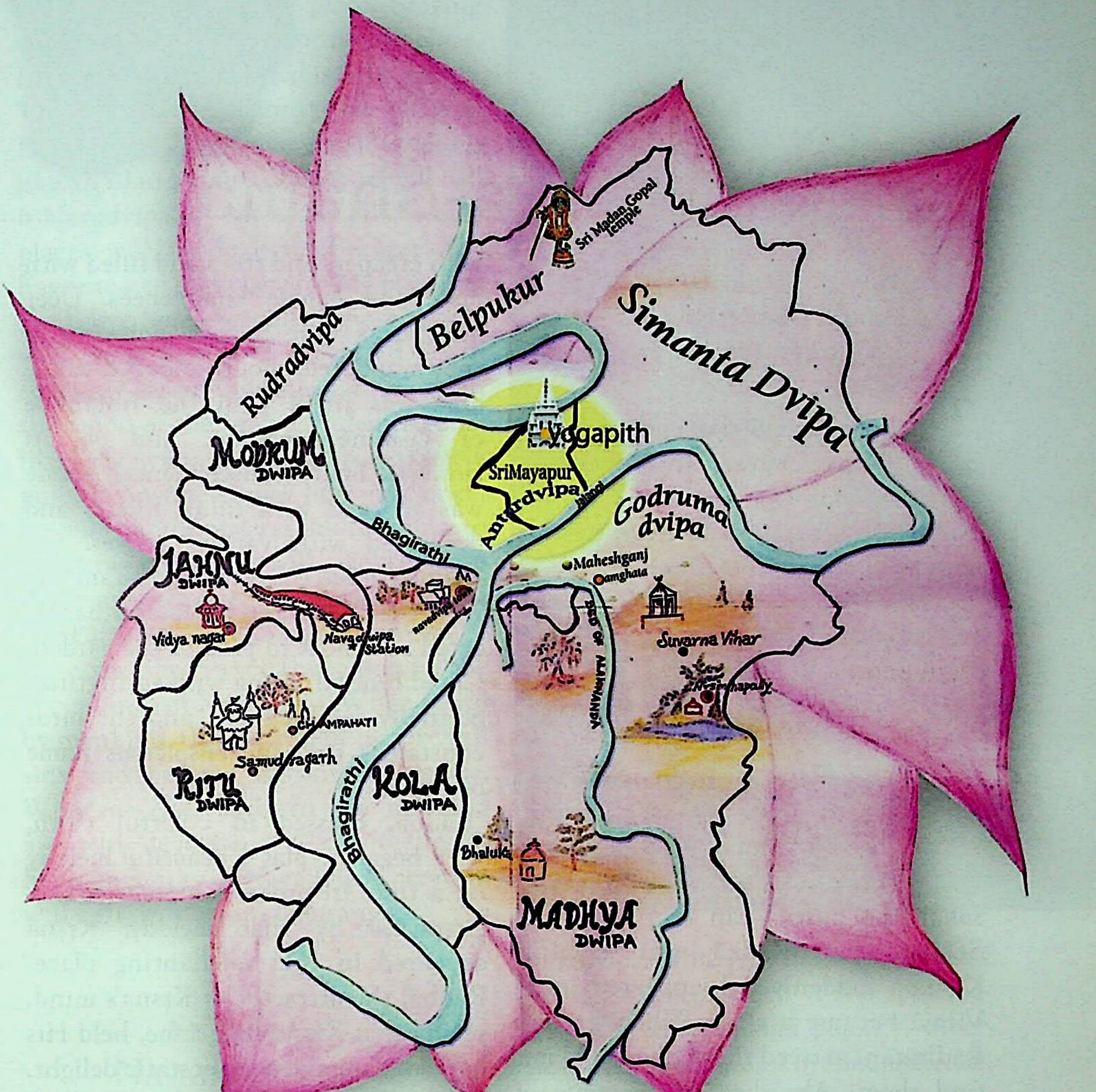
Your humble *dāsānudāsa*,
Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my most sincere thanks to the following devotees for their kind help in publishing this nectarine book. Without the help of these devotees it would not have been possible to manifest this work.

Braja Sevaki Devī Dāsī, worked on the book in its primary stages. Gaurāṅga Siṁha Prabhu thankfully stepped in to finish the editing when her health prevented her from doing so. I am very thankful to them both. Vaikuṇṭha Nitāi Prabhu very mercifully designed and took the trouble to print the book. I am very much indebted to him. Special thanks to Jahnudvīpa Prabhu who did the nice layout and helped us in many ways. I am very thankful to Kiśora Prabhu and his wife for checking the Sanskrit verses and words. All the photos in this book were taken by Śivānanda Prabhu from South Africa, who arrived just at the time I needed the photos. I take this as the arrangement of Lord Gaurāṅga. I am also very thankful to Vrajanātha Prabhu who took the trouble of taking Śivānanda Prabhu all over Navadvīpa-dhāma to take the photographs.

I am also very grateful to Dvārakādhīśa Prabhu for his financial help in publishing this book.


Sri Madan Gopal temple
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Belpukur
Simanta Dvipa
Yogapith
SriMayapur
Antardvipa
Jalangi
Godruma dvipa
MODRUMA DWIPA
Bhagirathi
JAHNU DWIPA
Maheshganj
Samghata
Vidya nagar
Navadvipa Station
Navadvipa town
Bed of Alakananda
Suvarna Vihar
Nrsimhapally
CHAMPAHATI
Samudragarh
RITU DWIPA
Bhagirathi
KOLA DWIPA
Bhaluka
MADHYA DWIPA

NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma

THE APPEARANCE OF ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

The holy *dhāma* descends with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, His associates and paraphernalia. Śrī Māyāpur-dhāma, however, was Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's own creation, to lure Kṛṣṇa away from another lover.

In the *Ananta-saṁhitā*, Lord Śiva explains to Pārvatī why Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī created the merciful Śrīdhāma Māyāpur.

Lord Śiva told Pārvatī, "As a bee plays in a lotus, Kṛṣṇa was enjoying with Virajā in the pleasant forest groves of Vṛndāvana. Moon-faced, doe-eyed Rādhikā heard this news from one *sakhī* and hastily ran to find Kṛṣṇa. Seeing that Rādhā was coming, Kṛṣṇa suddenly disappeared and Virajā became a river. When Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī arrived there She could not find them. Absorbed in thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā began to think of how to attract Him away from Virajā.

"She gathered Her *sakhīs* together between the Gaṅgā and Yamunā rivers. She created a beautiful place, decorated with creepers and trees and filled with male and female bumblebees. Deer and bucks were happily enjoying as they wandered about, and the whole area was filled with the fragrance of jasmine, *mallikā*, and *mālatī* flowers. That transcendental abode was adorned with *tulasī* forests and decorated with various groves. On Rādhā's order, the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, with their pleasant water and banks, acted as a moat to protect the garden. Cupid himself, along with springtime, eternally resides there, and the birds constantly sing the auspicious name of Kṛṣṇa.

"Rādhā, dressed in colorful cloth, then began to play a beautiful melody on a flute in order to attract Kṛṣṇa. Attracted by that melody, Kṛṣṇa appeared in that enchanting place. Rādhā, the attractor of Kṛṣṇa's mind, seeing that Kṛṣṇa had come, held His hand and experienced ecstatic delight. Then Kṛṣṇa, understanding Rādhā's mood, spoke in a voice choked with love.

"'O lovely-faced Rādhā, You are My very life. There is no one more dear to Me than You. Therefore I will never leave You. Just for Me You have created this wonderful place. Staying with You, I will transform this place, filling it with new *sakhīs* and groves. The devotees will glorify this place as New (*nava*) Vṛndāvana. As this place is like an island (*dvīpa*), the wise will call it Navadvīpa. By My order, all the holy places will reside here. Because You have created this place for My pleasure, I will live here eternally. Those people who come here and worship Us will certainly attain Our eternal service in the mood of the *sakhīs*. O dear Rādhā, like Vṛndāvana, this place is extremely pure. If anyone comes here just once, he will obtain the results of going to all sacred places. He will quickly attain devotional service, which satisfies Us.'

"O Pārvatī," Lord Śiva continued, "I have described to you the reason for the appearance of Navadvīpa. When heard by mankind, this narration removes all sins and bestows devotional service. Whoever rises early in the morning and with devotion to Gaura recites or hears this story of Navadvīpa's creation will certainly attain Gaurāṅga."

RĀDHĀ AND KṚṢṆA

SVARŪPA OF NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

The following is a description of Navadvīpa-dhāma from *Śrī Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Navadvīpa, which is the crest-jewel of all holy abodes, which is the sporting-ground of the *sandhinī* potency, which measures sixteen *krośas* in circumference, which is manifest in nine islands, where the *cit* and *ānanda* potencies reside, and which is the sanctuary of all holy places, demigods, sages and scriptures—may the *dhāma* of Śrī Navadvīpa become visible to my eyes.

May my eyes behold the sixteen *krośas* of Vṛndāvana (within the circle of Mathurā-maṇḍala) as identical to Navadvīpa (within the circle of Gauḍa-maṇḍala). These *dhāmas* are but two manifestations of one principle that is infinitely beginningless and purely spiritual, and which, only for reasons of differing pastimes of the Lord, has taken the form of two immaculate abodes.

By His inconceivable potency *acintya-śakti*, which is infinite and spiritual, the Lord has brought these two *dhāmas* into the material world in order to liberate the living entities dwelling there. By the power of the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, may the souls bound in matter someday see these abodes of Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa.

Only by acquiring proper qualifications can all the senses of the living entities taste the spiritually variegated nectar of these holy *dhāmas*. Since unqualified material senses are incapable of tasting this sweet nectar, those so unfortunately endowed scornfully deride these places again and again as being insignificant locations made only of dull matter.

The basis of qualification is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa Himself and the mercy of His devotees. Out of compassion for the living entities, the *sādhus* bestow this transcendental qualification unto other devotees by their own association. One cannot attain this by following the paths of *jñāna* (transcendental knowledge), *karma* (fruitive activities) or *yoga* (mystic exercises). Only by means of *śraddhā* (devotional faith), while strictly keeping the association of the saintly devotees of the Lord, can one be victorious over matter.

The very moment that the living entity gives up the entangling network of material illusions related to the senses, the eyes of the soul will behold the splendor of the spiritual *dhāma*. Aha! Oh, when will I attain that state? When will I see Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, so far beyond the mirage of mundane existence?

Resembling an eight-petalled lotus in shape, this abode is immaculately pure. It is so cooling that it defeats the illumination of millions of moons. It is so brilliant that it defeats the effulgence of millions of suns. Sometimes that dhama will appear before my eyes.

NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA GLORIFIED IN DIFFERENT SCRIPTURES

kalau saṅkīrtanārambhe
bhaviṣyāmi śacī-sutaḥ
svarṇadī-tīram āsthāya
navadvīpe janāśraye
tatra dvija-kula-śreṣṭhe
bhaviṣyāmi dvijālaye

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "In Kali-yuga I will descend as the son of Śacī-devī on the bank of the Gaṅgā in the populated land of Navadvīpa. I will appear in the home of a respectable *brāhmaṇa* at the inauguration of *saṅkīrtana*."

(*Vāyu Purāṇa*)

śāntātmā lamba-kaṇṭhaś ca
gaurāṅgaś ca surāvṛtaḥ

"He will appear in a golden form as a peaceful soul with a long neck, surrounded by demigods."

(*Agni Purāṇa*)

sādhavaḥ kali-kāle tu
tyaktānya-tīrtha-sevanam
vṛndāraṇye 'thavā kṣetre
nava-khaṇḍe vasanti vā

"In Kali-yuga, saintly persons will give up living in other holy places and will live in Vṛndāvana or the land of Navadvīpa."

(*Garuḍa Purāṇa*)

māyāpurīṁ samāśritya
kalau ye mām upāsate
sarva-pāpa-vinirmuktās
te yānti paramāṁ gatim
yat-tīrthaṁ vartate śrīman
navadvīpe vibhāgaśaḥ
tat-tīrtha-mahimā tatra
śata-koṭī-guṇaṁ kalau
yathā cintāmaṇeḥ saṅgāt
dhātu-mūlyaṁ pravardhate
gaura-saṅgāt tathā tīrtha-
māhātmyaṁ parivardhate

"Those who worship Me in Kali-yuga while residing in Māyāpurī will be freed from all sinful reactions and will achieve the supreme destination. Know that all holy places which separately reside in Navadvīpa are one billion times more glorious in Kali-yuga. Just as metal in touch with a touchstone increases its value, the glory of a *tīrtha* grows when it is in touch with Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu."

(*Skanda Purāṇa*)

māyā māyāpurī sākṣāt
sarvānanda-vivardhinī
śrī-garga-saṁhitāyāṁ sā
kīrtitā pāpa-nāśinī

"Māyāpurī is directly *māyā* who increases everyone's happiness. The glories of that city which destroys all sin are narrated in *Śrī Garga-saṁhitā*."

(*Skanda Purāṇa*)

māyā tu bilva-nīlād vā
gaṅgā-dvāra-vinirgatā
kuśāvarta-mayī dhrauvyā
dhruva-maṇḍala-madhyagā

"Māyā has originated from Gaṅgādvāra or from Bilvanīla-kṣetra. It is manifested in Kuśāvarta, it is fixed and travels through the Dhruva-maṇḍala."

(Skanda Purāṇa)

bhagavan-mandirād rājann
uttarasyāṁ diśi śrutam
krośārdhe nṛpa-śārdūla
māyā-tīrthaṁ manoharam

"O best of kings, I have heard that the attractive Māyā-tīrtha extends from the Lord's temple and half a *krośa* towards the north."

(Skanda Purāṇa)

gaṅgāyā dakṣiṇe bhāge
navadvīpe manohare
kali-pāpa-vināśāya
śacī-garbhe sanātanaḥ
janiṣyati priye miśra-
purandara-gṛhe svayam
phālgune paurṇamāsyāṁ ca
niśāyāṁ gaura-vigrahaḥ

"Lord Śiva said to goddess Caṇḍikā: 'O beloved one, on the southern side of the river Gaṅgā in the pleasant Navadvīpa-dhāma, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa will appear to destroy the sins of Kali-yuga. He will take birth on the full-moon night of the month of Phālguna (February-March) in the house of Miśra Purandara from the womb of Śacī-devī in a golden form."

(Śrī Viśvasāra Tantra)

tataḥ kāle ca samprāpte
kalau ko 'pi mahā-nidhiḥ
hari-nāma-prakāśāya
gaṅgā-tīre janiṣyati

"Lord Śiva (Śambhu) said to Pārvatī: 'And then in the beginning of Kali-yuga a personality who is an ocean of good qualities will take birth on the bank of the Gaṅgā to preach the holy names of Lord Hari.'"

(Kulārṇava Tantra)

kalau pūrṇānandas
tri-bhuvana-jayī
gaura-sutanur
navadvīpe jātaḥ
suradhuni-samīpe narahariḥ
dadat pāpībhyaḥ
saṁstutam api harer
nāma sukṛtaṁ
taritvā pāpābdhiṁ
bhuvi vijayate
śrī-gauracandrābhidhaḥ

"That personality who is full of bliss and victorious all over the three planetary systems will arise near the Gaṅgā in Navadvīpa. He will have a beautiful golden form and will give sinful persons the most pure *hari-nāma* to deliver them from the ocean of sins. He is famous in the world as Lord Gauracandra."

(*Bṛhad-brahma-yāmala Tantra*)

vande gaurāvatāraṁ kali-mala-
mathanaṁ śrī-navadvīpa-vāsaṁ
kaṇṭhe mālāṁ dadhānaṁ śruti-yuga-
vilasat-svarṇa-saṁsakta-gaṇḍam
keyūrāṅgada-divya-ratna-ghaṭitaṁ
bāhu-dvaye bibhrataṁ
bhaktebhyo dadataṁ malāpaharaṇaṁ
nāmāpi sarvaṁ hareḥ

"Gaurahari who lives in Navadvīpa to destroy the sins of Kali-yuga, wears a flower garland on His neck, and shining golden earrings decorating His cheeks. His arms are decorated with armlets and bracelets inlaid with divine gems. He distributes the holy names of Hari, which destroy all sins, to the devotees. I worship that Śrī Gaurasundara.'"

(*Bṛhad-brahma-yāmala Tantra*)

jambudvīpe kalau ghore
māyāpure dvijālaye
janitvā pārṣadaiḥ sārdhaṁ
kīrtanaṁ kārayiṣyati

"In the dark age of Kali-yuga, in Māyāpur within Jambudvīpa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will perform *kīrtana* along with His associates. He will take birth in the house of a *brāhmaṇa*."

(*Kapila-tantra*)

kurukṣetraṁ kṛte tīrthaṁ
tretāyāṁ puṣkaraṁ smṛtam
dvāpare naimiṣāraṇyaṁ
nava-khaṇḍaṁ kalau kila

"Kurukṣetra is the *tīrtha* (purifying holy place) of Satya-yuga, Puṣkara for Tretā-yuga, Naimiṣāraṇya for Dvāpara-yuga and Navadvīpa for Kali-yuga."

(*Mukti-saṅkalinī Tantra*)

athavāhaṁ dharādhāme
bhūtvā mad-bhakta-rūpa-dhṛk
māyāyāṁ ca bhaviṣyāmi
kalau saṅkīrtanāgame

"Or else, I will descend in the form of My devotee in Kali-yuga at the beginning of the age of *saṅkīrtana* on earth in Māyāpur."

(*Brahma-yāmala*)

puṇya-kṣetre navadvīpe
bhaviṣyati śacī-sutaḥ

"The son of Śacī-devī will appear in the holy land of Navadvīpa."

(*Kṛṣṇa-yāmala*)

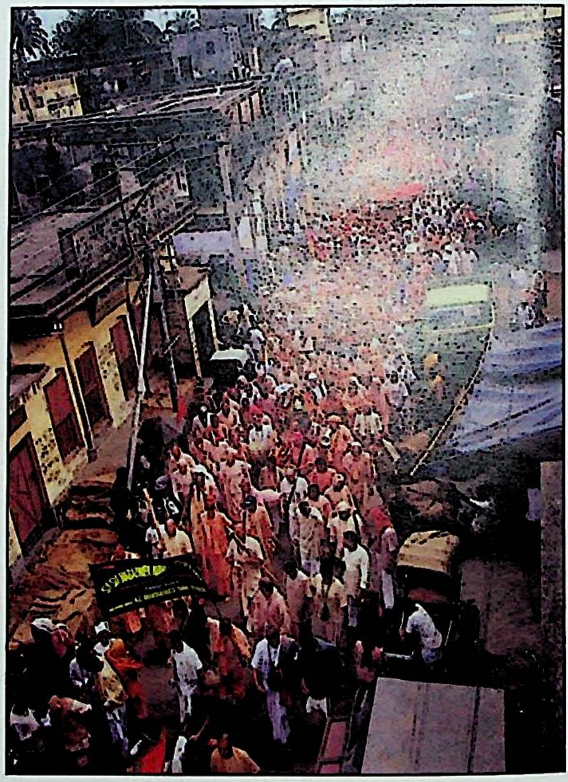
DIFFERENT TYPES OF PARIKRAMĀ IN NAVADVĪPA

Nityānanda Prabhu said to Jīva, "The order in which we have proceeded till now is the authorized order of *parikramā* with the best effect. When Śrī Caitanya brought His associates to purify the Kazi with an evening *kīrtana* contingent of fourteen *mṛdaṅgas*, His starting point was Māyāpur. Through the period of one night, which extended to one night of Brahmā due to the sweet *kīrtana*, Gaurāṅga wandered through His land. After that, every Ekādaśī *tithi* My Lord went on *saṅkīrtana*, wandering over the sacred islands. Sometimes He wandered around within the five *krośas* of Antardvīpa, and sometimes, according to His desire, within the eight *krośas*.

"From His house, He went first to Bārakoṇā-ghāṭa, then around Ballāl-dīghi, and then to Śrīdhara's house. From there, He would go to the edge of Antardvīpa and thus easily complete a five *krośa* tour. From Simuliyā, He would go to the Kazi's house. After talking to Śrīdhara, He would go to Gādigāchā (Godruma), and then to Mājidā (Madhyadvīpa). Crossing the Gaṅgā at that point, on the other bank He would go up to Pāraśāṅgā and Chināśāṅgā, on the bank of the Gaṅgā. Then crossing the river again, He would return home, completing the eight *krośas*.

"The complete *parikramā* is sixteen *krośas*, and if that is done, the Lord is pleased. This is the tour I am taking you on. There is no equal to this. Within this tour you will see all the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana which extend over sixteen *krośas*. This tour ends after nine nights and is thus called *navarātra-parikramā* in the scripture. One does the five *krośa parikramā* in one day, and the eight *krośa parikramā* is completed after three nights. The first night is spent in Māyāpur, the second night in Godruma, and the third night at Pulina, on the opposite bank of the Ganges."

Hearing this instruction on the method of *parikramā*, Jīva Mahāśaya could not contain his love.



ISKCON PARIKRAMĀ

THE PROCEDURE FOR PARIKRAMĀ OF NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

Sādhus and *śāstras* have explained the rules of *parikramā*. After having *darśana* of Māyāpur in Antardvīpa, learned devotees go to Sīmantadvīpa. Next one should go south of Māyāpur to Godrumadvīpa, then one should joyfully go to Madhyadvīpa. After seeing these four islands on the eastern bank, one should reverently cross the River Gaṅgā. Having walked around Koladvīpa at leisure, then take *darśana* of Ṛtudvīpa. After seeing the most beautiful Jahnudvīpa, go see Modadrumadvīpa and then Rudradvīpa. Then again cross the Gaṅgā, and walk back to Māyāpur. There, respectfully enter the temple of Jagannātha Miśra and Śacīdevī and take *darśana* of the Lord. This is the procedure of *parikramā* for all times. One who follows this practice will obtain unlimited happiness.

Everyone agrees that the best time for performing *parikramā* is from the *tithi* of Mākarī-saptamī up to the full moon, or *pūrṇimā* of Phālguna. After concluding the *parikramā*, fortunate persons take *darśana* at Māyāpur on the birthday of Lord Caitanya. Nitāi and Caitanya bestow Their mercy and the shade of Their lotus feet on those persons, who thus attain the qualification to execute devotional service. Briefly I have described the rules for *parikramā*, and now I will describe everything in detail. Therefore, please listen. Whoever walks around the one hundred sixty-eight miles of Gaura-maṇḍala will quickly obtain the treasure of *gaura-prema*.

(from Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa, Chapter Three)

NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA GENERAL INFORMATION

It is not proper to limit the size of the *dhāma* as it is all-pervading and unlimited. In Navadvīpa-dhāma, all the Vaikuṇṭha planets are resting. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written that in just one portion of Navadvīpa-dhāma all the sacred places, sages, *munis*, demigods, Vedic scriptures, and *mantras* reside. But for the benefit of our limited vision, the *ācāryas* have mentioned different area sizes of the *dhāmas*.

Navadvīpa-dhāma is situated at the centre of Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi, which is shaped like a one hundred-petalled lotus. Its circumference is 270 km (168 miles), its diameter is 90 km (56 miles), and its radius is 51 km (32 miles). The Gaṅgā flows through the centre of Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. Śrī Gaurāṅga performed His pastimes throughout Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. It is stated,

gauḍa-maṇḍala-bhūmi, y
ebā jāne cintāmaṇi,
tāra haya
vraja-bhūme vāsa

One who understands the transcendental nature of Navadvīpa and its surrounding area, where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu enacted His pastimes, resides always in Vṛndāvana.

(Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura,
Sāvaraṇa-śrī-gaura-mahimā
[The Glories of Śrī Gaurāṅga],
Prārthanā)

There is a place called Nadia in Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. Now this area is known as a district in West Bengal. But in fact there is no particular town or village known as Nadia. Navadvīpa-dhāma is situated in Nadia.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has unlimited forms, through which He enjoys unlimited *rasas* and exhibits unlimited *bhāvas*. The three main *bhāvas* are *aiśvarya-bhāva*, *mādhurya-bhāva*, and *audārya-bhāva*. In Vaikuṇṭha, the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the form of Nārāyaṇa enjoys *aiśvarya-bhāva*. In Goloka Vṛndāvana, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa enjoys *mādhurya-bhāva*. In Navadvīpa, the Lord in the form of Śrī Gaurāṅga enjoys *audārya-bhāva*. *Audārya* means magnanimity, generosity, or overflowing mercy. By this mood of magnanimity the Lord enables His devotees to possess all qualities that He Himself possesses. Navadvīpa means nine (*nava*) islands (*dvīpa*). During Mahāprabhu's time these nine islands were more visibly distinct due to the flow of different rivers and lakes all over Navadvīpa. These rivers are no longer running, but some areas of dry river beds or portions of rivers with water can still be seen. It has been mentioned that there were sixteen rivers flowing through Navadvīpa, and the nine islands were created due to the intersecting flow of these rivers. Those rivers were:

1. Yamunā
2. Bhogavatī
3. Alakanandā
4. Kāverī
5. Sarasvatī
6. Tāmraparṇī
7. Brahmaputra
8. Sarayū
9. Gaṅgā
10. Mānasa-gaṅgā
11. Kṛtamālā
12. Vidyādharī
13. Narmadā
14. Gomatī
15. Mandākinī
16. Godāvarī

The nine islands of Navadvīpa-dhāma resemble an eight-petalled lotus flower with a whorl (*karṇikā*) at the centre. Of the nine islands, four are situated on the eastern side of the Gaṅgā, and five are situated on the western side. The four eastern islands are Antardvīpa, Sīmantadvīpa, Godrumadvīpa, and Madhyadvīpa. The five western islands are Koladvīpa, Ṛtudvīpa, Jahnudvīpa, Modadrumadvīpa, and Rudradvīpa. Each island represents one of the nine processes of devotional service.

1. Antardvīpa represents *ātma-nivedanam*, full surrender
2. Sīmantadvīpa represents *śravaṇam*, hearing
3. Godrumadvīpa represents *kīrtanam*, chanting
4. Madhyadvīpa represents *smaraṇam*, remembering
5. Koladvīpa represents *pāda-sevanam*, serving the lotus feet
6. Ṛtudvīpa represents *arcanam*, worship
7. Jahnudvīpa represents *vandanam*, praying
8. Modadrumadvīpa represents *dāsyam*, becoming a servant
9. Rudradvīpa represents *sakhyam*, being a friend

It is recommended that one performs Navadvīpa-maṇḍala-parikramā in the order mentioned above.

The center of Navadvīpa is Antardvīpa. Antardvīpa is located at the *karṇikā* of the eight-petalled lotus. The circumference of Antardvīpa is 16 km (10 miles). The *śāstras* describe that the island situated at the junction of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā rivers is Antardvīpa, and Māyāpur lies within Antardvīpa. Māyāpur's circumference is almost 5 km (3 miles). At the centre of Māyāpur is the Yoga-pīṭha, which is the central point of Navadvīpa-dhāma and the appearance place of Śrī Gaurāṅga.

The seven holy cities present in Navadvīpa-dhāma are:

10. Mathurā
11. Ayodhyā
12. Haridvāra
13. Kāśī (Vārāṇasī)
14. Kāñcī
15. Avantī (Ujjain)
16. Dvārakā

The twelve forests, *dvādaśa-vana*, in Navadvīpa are:

1. Gokula Mahāvana: Antardvīpa
2. Madhuvana and Mathurā: north of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa, Chand Kazi's house.
3. Nandagrāma: Godrumadvīpa
4. Bahulāvana: Koladvīpa
5. Giri Govardhana: Kuliyā-pāhāḍa (mountain) in Koladvīpa
6. Bhadravana: Jahnudvīpa
7. Bhāṇḍīravana: Modadrumadvīpa
8. Kāmyavana: Mahatpura in Modadrumadvīpa
9. Tālavana: Mayamārī in Sīmantadvīpa

10. Bilvavana: Rudradvīpa
11. Khadiravana: Campahaṭṭa
12. Rādhā-kuṇḍa: Ṛtudvīpa

All incarnations of the Lord also reside in Navadvīpa. During the four different *yugas*, the Lord appeared in four different forms in Navadvīpa-dhāma:

1. Satya-yuga: as Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva, in Godrumadvīpa
2. Tretā-yuga: as Rāmacandra, in Modadrumadvīpa
3. Dvāpara-yuga: as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in Samudra gara in Koladvīpa
4. Kali-yuga: as Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. He also appeared as Varāhadeva in Koladvīpa.

Great demigods and goddesses like Brahmā, Rudra, Indra, and Pārvatī, also came to Navadvīpa-dhāma to perform austerities in order to receive the blessings of Śrī Gaurāṅga. Great *ṛṣis* and *munis*, like the four Kumāras, the Six Gosvāmīs, and Jahnu Muni, were also performing *tapasya* in Navadvīpa-dhāma. The *ācāryas* of the four *sampradāyas*—Nimbārkācārya, Madhvācārya, Viṣṇusvāmī, and Rāmānujācārya—also visited Navadvīpa-dhāma and were blessed by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Following the footsteps of all previous *ācāryas*, our most beloved Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, His Divine Grace Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, also accepts Śrī Navadvīpa as his place of worship.

Citations from *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa:*

Now hear, brothers, of the places that I will describe within the sixteen *krośas* of Navadvīpa-dhāma.

Sixteen rivers exist eternally within the sixteen *krośa* area of Navadvīpa. On the eastern bank of the main flow of the Gaṅgā are four islands and on the western bank there are five. The different tributaries of the Gaṅgā surround these islands and give the *dhāma* its splendor. The main flow of the Gaṅgā always flows in the middle, while other pious rivers flow in various tributaries. Near the Gaṅgā flows the beautiful Yamunā, and the Sarasvatī flows within another river. East of the Yamunā are the long streams of the Tāmraparṇī, the Kṛtamālā, and the Brahmaputra. The Sarayū, Narmadā, Sindhu, Kāverī, Gomatī, and Godāvarī flow swiftly throughout the breadth of Navadvīpa. All these rivers intersect to form the nine different islands of Navadvīpa.

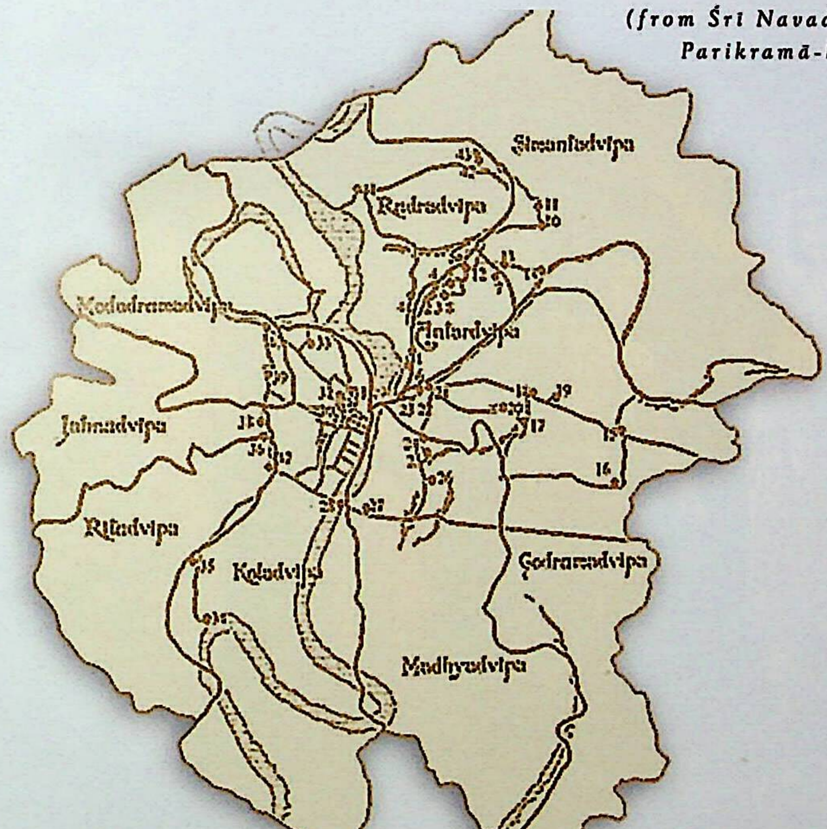
Following the desires of the Lord, sometimes the streams dry up, and then again by His wish they flow with water; by the Lord's wish sometimes places become covered with water, and by His wish they again become visible. In this way the *dhāma* endlessly enacts its *līlā*, but the same *dhāma* remains always manifest to the fortunate living entity. If a devotee has an acute desire in his heart, all the islands and rivers will be visible. By devotion, the *dhāma* is sometimes visible in dreams, meditation, or to the naked eye.

The island which lies at the junction of the Gaṅgā and Yamunā is known in the *śāstras* as Antardvīpa. Within Antardvīpa lies the holy sanctuary of Māyāpur, where Lord Caitanya appeared. Know, devotees, that Mahāvana, in the center of Goloka, is none other than Māyāpur of Navadvīpa.

Śvetadvīpa, Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka, and Vṛndāvana reside in Navadvīpa at all times. By the order of Gauracandra, the seven holy cities: Ayodhyā, Mathurā, Māyā (Haridvāra), Kāśī, Kāñcī, Avantī (Ujjain), and Dvārakā, are always present in their own places within Navadvīpa. The city of Māyā, at Gaṅgādvāra, has its original form as Māyāpur in Navadvīpa-dhāma. The glories of this particular place are profusely sung in the scriptures.

That person who once visits Māyāpur is easily freed from the bondage of *māyā*. One who walks throughout Māyāpur is freed from the influence of *māyā* and the repetition of birth.

(from Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa, Chapter Three)



Śrī Antardvīpa

This island represents *ātma-nivedanam*-full surrender to the Lord.

Antardvīpa is the central island of Navadvīpa, situated on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā. The circumference of this island is ten miles. Antardvīpa is the first island visited during the Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā. Yoga-pīṭha, where Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu appeared, is located here. Antardvīpa is compared to Gokula Mahāvana of Vraja-maṇḍala where Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa took birth.

Places to visit on this island are the Yoga-

antardvīpe hariḥ sākṣād
brahmāṇaṁ kṛpayā svayam
gaurāvatāra-tātparyaṁ
kathayām āsa tattvataḥ

"IN ANTARDVĪPA ŚRI HARI HIMSELF, BEING VERY MERCIFUL UPON LORD BRAHMĀ, EXPLAINED TO HIM THE REAL PURPOSE OF ŚRĪ-GAURĀṄGA-AVATĀRA."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 32)

pīṭha (birthplace of Lord Gaurāṅga), Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, Śrī Advaita Bhavan, Śrī Gadādhara Āṅgana, Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, Bharadvāja-ṭilā, Murāri Gupta Śrīpāṭa, Śrīdhara Āṅgana and Nandana Ācārya's house.

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura glorifies Antardvīpa as follows:

"In the center of eight islands that are like the eight petals of a lotus flower is the ninth and best island called Antardvīpa, which is exceedingly beautiful. In the middle of that island rests the Yoga-pīṭha. Upon seeing this place, I shall experience profuse bliss.

The scriptures sing of a transcendental place called Brahmapura. In that realm, Māyāpur shines before one's eyes freed from illusion. Identical with Śrī Gokula in the forest of Mahāvana in Vraja and vastly superior to all other places in creation, that place is where the son of Śacī performs His eternal pastimes.

The abode of the *gopas* and *gopīs* in Vraja named Śrī Gokula is the same as the abode of the *brāhmaṇa* families in Navadvīpa-dhāma. In the center of supremely purifying Māyāpur is the radiant home of Jagannātha Miśra. This is the eternal residence of the Lord.

One whose eyes are covered by material illusion sees only a small house situated here, as well as some ordinary earth, water and a few articles.

But if *māyā* becomes merciful and lifts her covering, then one sees a grand spiritual dwelling.

Here Śrī Gaurāṅga is served by His eternal mother and father as well as by male and female servants, who are all incessantly maddened with ecstatic love. Here both His wives, Lakṣmīpriyā and Viṣṇupriyā, eternally serve the Lord's lotus feet. He manifests in a wondrous form complete in the five features of Pañca-tattva.

The residences of Śrī Nityānanda

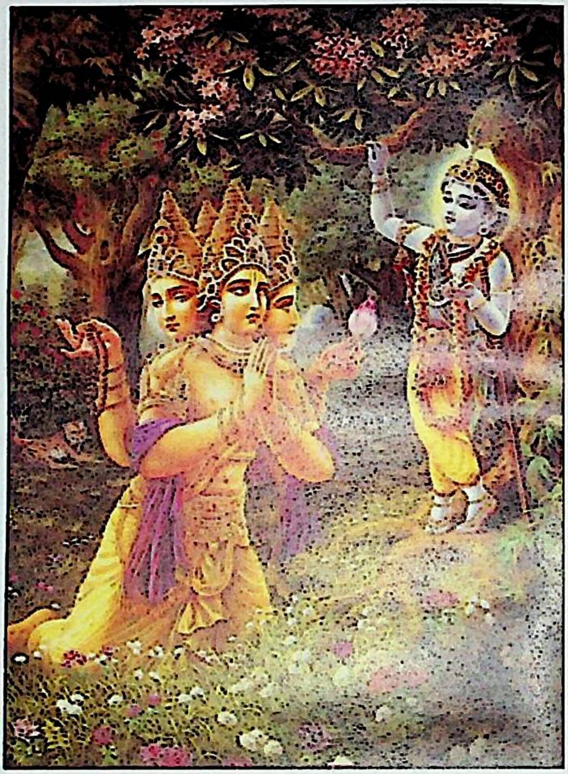
Prabhu, Śrī Advaita, Gadādhara, and Śrīvāsa are shining here and there in different places throughout Māyāpur. Indeed, the homes of innumerable devotees are glowing in all four directions. May such a Māyāpur be merciful unto me." (*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

WHY IS THIS ISLAND NAMED ANTARDVĪPA?

Antardvīpa was previously known as Ātopur. Five thousand years ago Brahmā came here to worship Lord Gaurāṅga.

Once, five hundred years ego, Īśāna Ṭhākura took Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and Rāmacandra Kavirāja on Navadvīpa Parikramā. Very early one morning Īśāna Ṭhākura brought them here and gave them the following explanation as to why this place is known as Antardvīpa.

During Dvāpara-yuga Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was displaying His pastimes in Vraja. Everyone including Brahmā was bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once in Vṛndāvana when Lord Kṛṣṇa, along with His friends, was grazing calves in the forest, Brahmā decided to test whether Kṛṣṇa is God or not. By his yogic power Brahmā stole all the calves and cowherd friends of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, immediately knew what Brahmā had done. Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to teach Brahmā a lesson so the Lord instantly created, from His own transcendental body, exactly the same number of calves and cowherd boys. Thus Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa destroyed the pride of Brahmā.



Defeated by the Lord, Brahmā realized his mistake. He understood that he had committed a great offense at the lotus feet of the Lord and so offered prayers to the Lord and begged for forgiveness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa out of His causeless mercy excused Brahmā, but Brahmā was not yet satisfied. He thought to himself, "Because of my elevated position as

Brahmā I am very proud. Therefore I have been deprived of *kṛṣṇa-premā* and enjoyment of Kṛṣṇa's sweet *vraja-līlā*. This position of Brahmā is useless. If I would take birth as a cowherd boy I would very easily be able to serve Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the husband of the *gopikās*. I could not develop the proper mood and I dared to steal the cows and cowherd boys. Due to pride in my elevated position I fear that I may again commit the same offense towards the Lord when He comes as Lord Gaurāṅga during the next *yuga*, Kali-yuga."

Once Brahmā was sitting alone thinking to himself, "I do not see anyone else who can help me except Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu will descend during the first part of Kali-yuga to bless the people of that *yuga*. If I worship the Lord in Navadvīpa-dhāma then the Lord will definitely fulfil my desire."

Thinking like this Brahmā came to this place known as Ātopur in Navadvīpa-dhāma and worshiped Lord Gaurāṅga very jubilantly. After the completion of a period of *bhajana*, the most merciful Lord Gauracandra appeared in front of the four-headed Lord Brahmā. The Lord appeared there in His most captivating form, attracting the living entities of the whole world. All ten directions were dazzled by the effulgence of His transcendental body. The beauty of His body defeated the beauty of Kandarpa (Cupid). He had a broad chest and long arms extending all the way down to His thighs. His whole body was decorated with many varieties of ornaments. His eyes extended up to His ears and His glances were very wonderful. His face was more beautiful than millions of moons and He had a slight smile on His face. There was no one who was not attracted to Him. When Brahmā saw the Lord of his life, he became very ecstatic and could not control himself. His whole body started to tremble. He began offering many prayers to the Lord as his eyes filled with tears. Brahmā fell at the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. Seeing Brahmā in this condition Lord Gaurāṅga, the son of Śacī-devī, embraced him and spoke to him with very sweet words, "Oh, Brahmā! I am very pleased with your worship of Me. Now I have come to you to fulfil your desire." By hearing the sweet words of the Lord, Brahmā opened his eyes, fainted upon seeing Lord Gaurāṅga in front of him and fell on the ground at the lotus feet of the Lord. The Lord placed His lotus feet on the head of Brahmā and thus Brahmā gained transcendental knowledge and started to offer prayers to the Lord. Brahmā said, "I am very wretched. Due to my proud nature I have forgotten Your lotus feet and become engrossed in material pleasure. The scriptures describe myself, Indra, Mahādeva and all the other *devas* as Your servants, but we are not so fortunate to be Your pure devotees. That is why we sometimes become influenced by Your illusory energy. I have passed the first *parārdha* of my life (half of my life). I am concerned about how to spend the second half of my life-span. I am worried that I will become *bahirmukha* (averse, turning my face away from You). I pray at Your lotus feet to kindly accept me as Your associate in Your manifested pastime in this Kali-yuga when You will appear in Nadia along with Your associates. Please bless me so that my pride of thinking of myself as Brahmā will be removed and I will chant Your glories, constantly staying in Your association. For this, kindly give me birth in a low family. I am very proud. Kindly punish me in such a way that people will hate me. Remove my terrible mentality and allow me to develop great attachment to Your holy name. As You have bewildered me in Your previous pastime, please do not bewilder me in this pastime. I want constant association of Your devotees and to meditate on You always." Lord Gaurāṅga was very happy to hear Brahma's prayer. He replied, "Let it be so. Let your desire be fulfilled. When I next manifest My pastimes on earth you will take birth in the house of Yavanas (persons outside of Vedic culture). At that time you will be completely free from any pride. You will be a great devotee and known as Haridāsa.

You will feel very fallen and humble. You will chant three hundred thousand holy names daily and at the time of leaving your body you will have My darsana.

By the power of your *sādhana* you will enter My eternal abode Navadvīpa-dhāma at the end of your life."

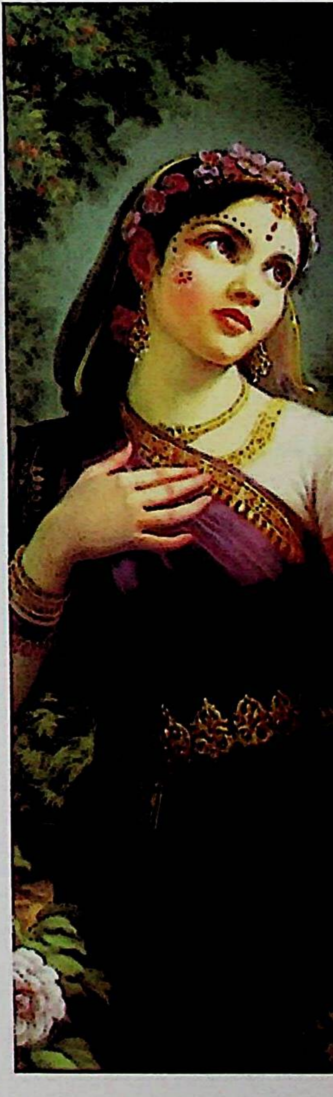
Hearing this from the Lord, Brahmā offered obeisances again and again. He spoke very gently, "O my Lord! You are independent and transcendental to everything. Who can understand Your heart? You have exhibited many pastimes during Your previous incarnations. I do not know which special pastimes You will exhibit when You appear in Nadia. It is no wonder that You will deliver all the living entities. This is a very simple task for You. Please tell me, I wish to hear whether You have any other special purpose for manifesting Your pastimes in Nadia." Hearing the words of Brahmā and looking at him, the Lord spoke from His heart (*antar*), saying, "O Brahmā! Please listen, I will tell you something from the inner core of My heart (*antar*) but do not describe this fact anywhere in the scriptures. I will manifest Myself accepting the mood of My devotee and relish the mellows of devotion. I will manifest the most secret *saṅkīrtana*, giving *vraja-premā* to all the devotees of all My other incarnations. Everyone will be a follower of *vraja-bhāva* in the mood of *mādhurya-rasa*. My heart is bound by the love of Śrī Rādhikā and I will descend accepting the mood and bodily color of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I will relish the same pleasure which is relished by Śrī Rādhikā in serving Me. From today you are accepted as My disciple and you will serve Me as Haridāsa." While saying this, the Lord's heart became filled with love for Rādhārāṇī. His eyes became flooded with tears due to the desire to fulfil three of His unfulfilled desires of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. The Lord was merciful to Brahmā and He informed him of these unfulfilled desires.

śrī-rādhāyāḥ
praṇaya-mahimā
kīdṛśo vānayaivā-svādyo
yenādbhuta-madhurimā
kīdṛśo vā madīyaḥ
saukhyaṁ cāsyā
mad-anubhavataḥ
kīdṛśaṁ veti lobhāt
tad-bhāvāḍhyaḥ samajani
śacī-garbha-sindhau
harīnduḥ

"Desiring to understand the glory of Rādhārāṇī's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the womb of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, as the moon appeared from the ocean." (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 1.7)

The Lord again told Brahmā that he would see His pastimes in Navadvīpa. After revealing His heart (*antar*) in this way the Lord disappeared (*antardhāna*). Therefore people call this place Antardvīpa.

When Brahmā saw the Lord disappear in front of him he immediately fainted due to separation and fell to the ground crying, "Hā Gaurāṅga! Hā Dīna-bandhu! Bhakta-vatsala! When will I attain Your lotus feet?" After crying for some days Brahmā went back to Brahmaloka to perform his duties. On this island Lord Gaurāṅga revealed the most confidential desire within His heart (*antar*) to Brahmā therefore it is known as Antardvīpa.



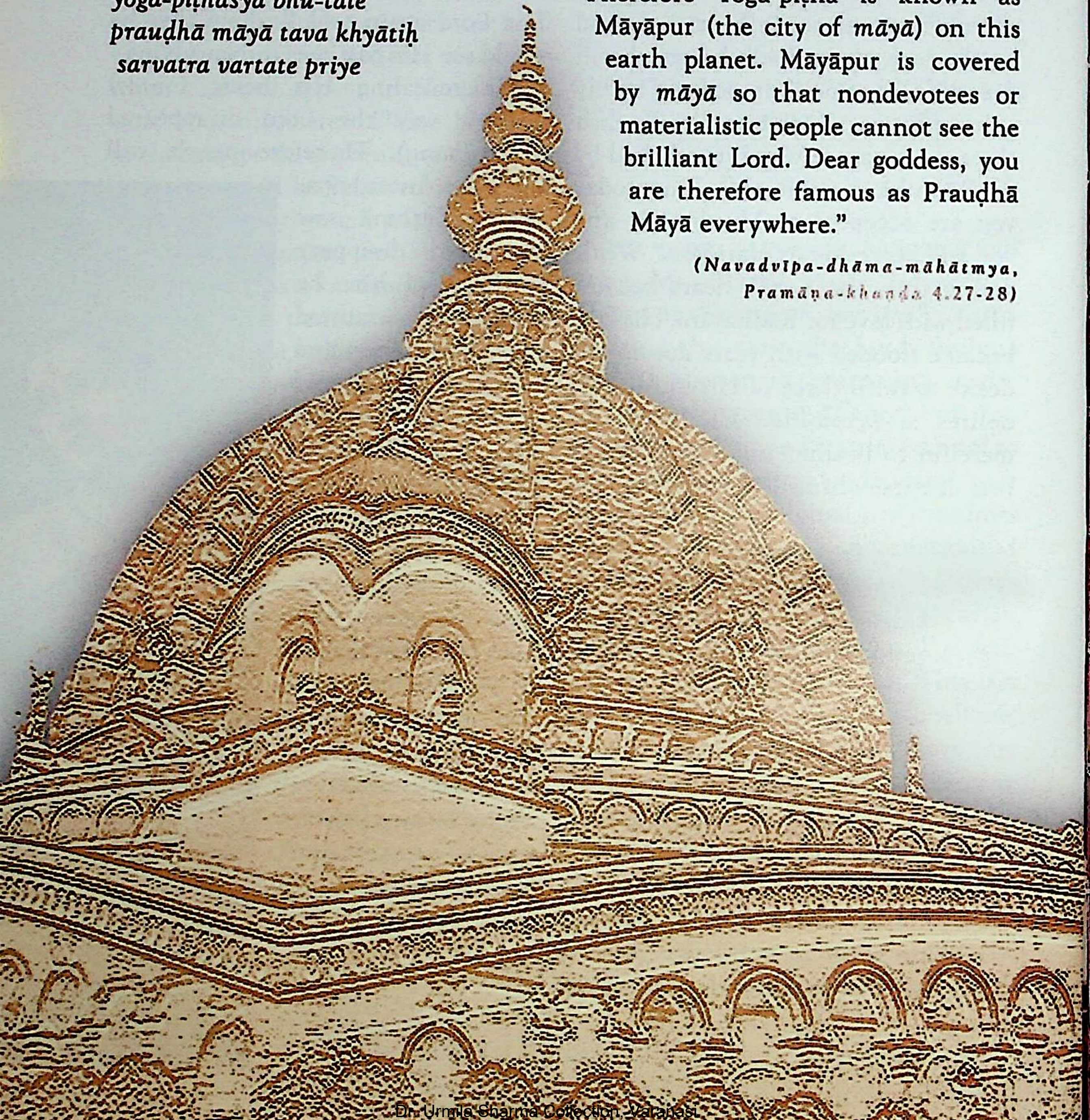
RIGHT / Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī

ŚRĪ MĀYĀPUR

tvaṁ hi māyā hareḥ
śakti-durghaṭana-paṭiyasī
cin-mayam antar-ādityam
ācchādayasi sāmpratam
tato māyāpura-khyātir
yoga-pīṭhasya bhū-tale
prauḍhā māyā tava khyātiḥ
sarvatra vartate priye

Lord Śiva said to goddess Pārvatī, "You are the *māyā* potency of Lord Śrī Hari who is expert in making impossible things possible. In the form of the external *māyā* potency of the Lord you hide the sun-like Lord of Antardvīpa from the vision of materialistic people. Therefore Yoga-pīṭha is known as Māyāpur (the city of *māyā*) on this earth planet. Māyāpur is covered by *māyā* so that nondevotees or materialistic people cannot see the brilliant Lord. Dear goddess, you are therefore famous as Prauḍhā Māyā everywhere."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, *Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.27-28)



Śrī Māyāpur is situated in the center of Antardvīpa. The circumference of Śrī Māyāpur measures three and a half miles and the diameter measures just over one mile.

In his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura glorifies Māyāpur as follows:

"To the south-west of Māyāpur, the combined Gaṅgā and Yamunā rivers praise their own good fortune as they flow in the form of a serpent for rendering service to Lord Gaura, the jewel of the twice-born *brāhmaṇas*. Upon the banks of the Gaṅgā are many different landing-steps for bathing (*ghāṭas*) and also numerous temples, housing many deities such as Prauḍhā Māyā and Vṛddha Śiva, as well as many groves and gardens.

In Māyāpur there are countless homes of the *brāhmaṇas*, wide avenues, courtyards, forests and temples of Lord Śiva. Flowing in the south-east are the incessant currents of the Sarasvatī River. Upon her bank is the sacred area known as Īśodyāna, the Lord's garden. Why should the fallen rascals of Kali-yuga, bound up tightly by material illusion, have the privilege of seeing all these eternal, fully spiritual, limitless treasures of the divine realm? *Māyā* has therefore hidden the *dhāma* by means of the erosive, ever-changing nature of the three rivers Gaṅgā, Yamunā and Sarasvatī. Thus the eyes of a materialist can see only a shadow of the real Māyāpur.

By the mercy of Śrī Nityānanda, the possessor of all spiritual powers, may that Māyāpur be revealed unto my eyes imbued with proper reverence. May I, this worthless fool, become truly fortunate to behold a vision of the household pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga that eternally take place in this land.

In the center of the island called Antardvīpa is the village of Māyāpur, situated as the central whorl of the eight-petalled lotus. That transcendental abode glows with a fair yellow aura, it is resplendent with networks of effulgences, and is supremely pure. May this place always shimmer before my eyes.

Wooded groves can be seen here and there. Among them stands a lake called Pṛthu-sarovara, and many pastures for grazing the cows. Oh how beautiful these places are to behold! There are many water canals, partitioned grain fields, and wide main roads lined with *bakula*, *kadamba*, and many other types of large trees."

(*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

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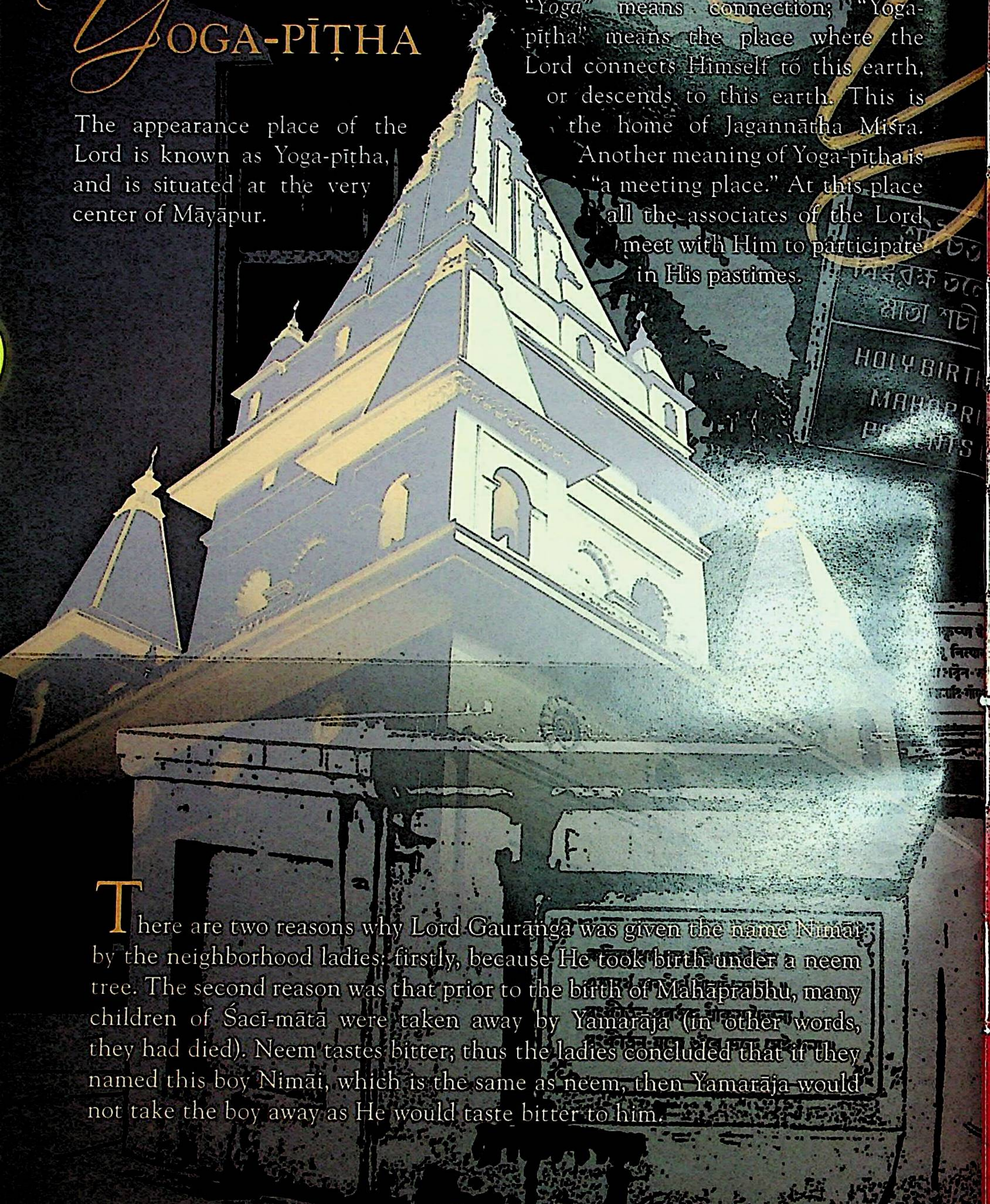
YOGA-PĪṬHA

The appearance place of the Lord is known as Yoga-pīṭha, and is situated at the very center of Māyāpur.

"Yoga" means connection; "Yoga-pīṭha" means the place where the Lord connects Himself to this earth, or descends to this earth. This is the home of Jagannātha Miśra. Another meaning of Yoga-pīṭha is "a meeting place." At this place all the associates of the Lord meet with Him to participate in His pastimes.



There are two reasons why Lord Gaurāṅga was given the name Nimāi by the neighborhood ladies: firstly, because He took birth under a neem tree. The second reason was that prior to the birth of Mahāprabhu, many children of Śacī-mātā were taken away by Yamarāja (in other words, they had died). Neem tastes bitter; thus the ladies concluded that if they named this boy Nimāi, which is the same as neem, then Yamarāja would not take the boy away as He would taste bitter to him.

YOGA-PĪṬHA

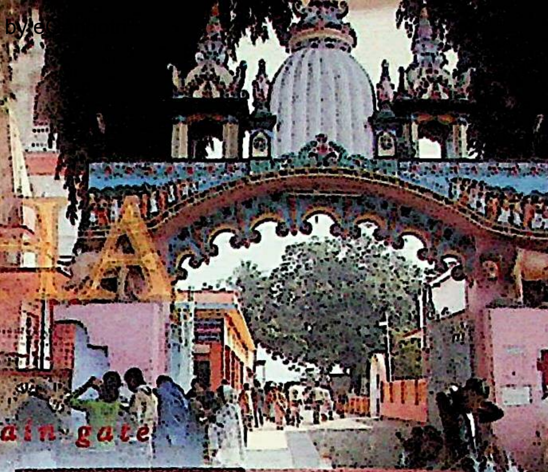
PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: 8.30-11.00 a.m. and 3.30-8.00 p.m.

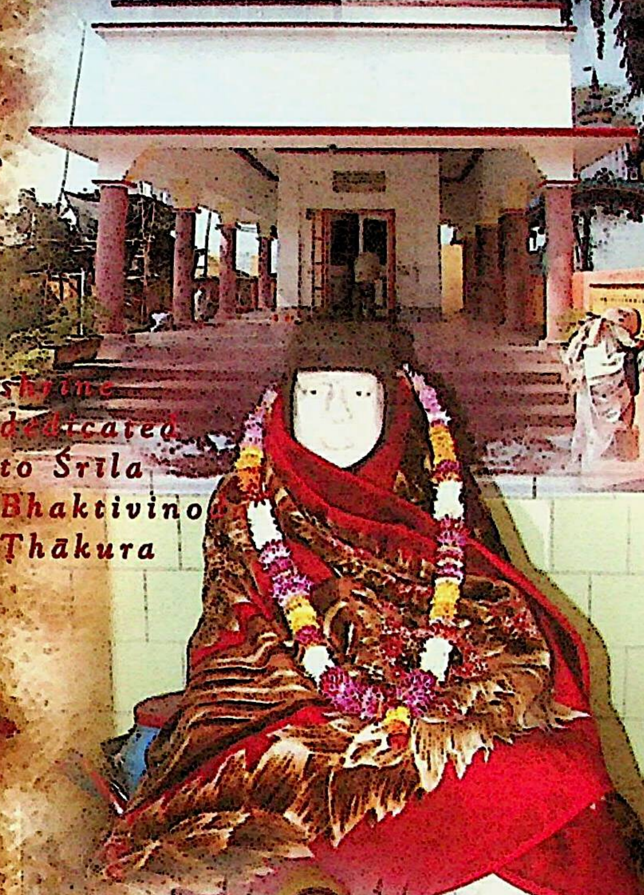
DIRECTIONS: Turn right outside the main gate of ISKCON and proceed down Bhaktisiddhānta Road for one kilometer. Yoga-pīṭha is on the right side of the road and has an ornate main gate.

PRESIDING DEITIES: When you enter the Yoga-pīṭha compound via the main gate from the road, you will see a shrine dedicated to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura on your right side.

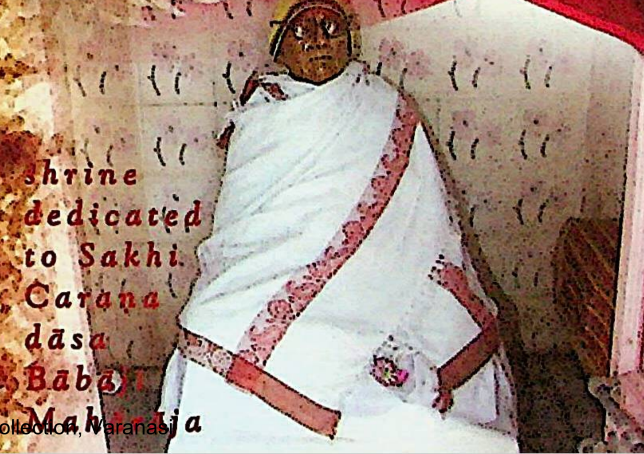
On the left there is a shrine dedicated to Sakhi Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, who had helped financially with the construction of the main temple at Yoga-pīṭha.



Main gate



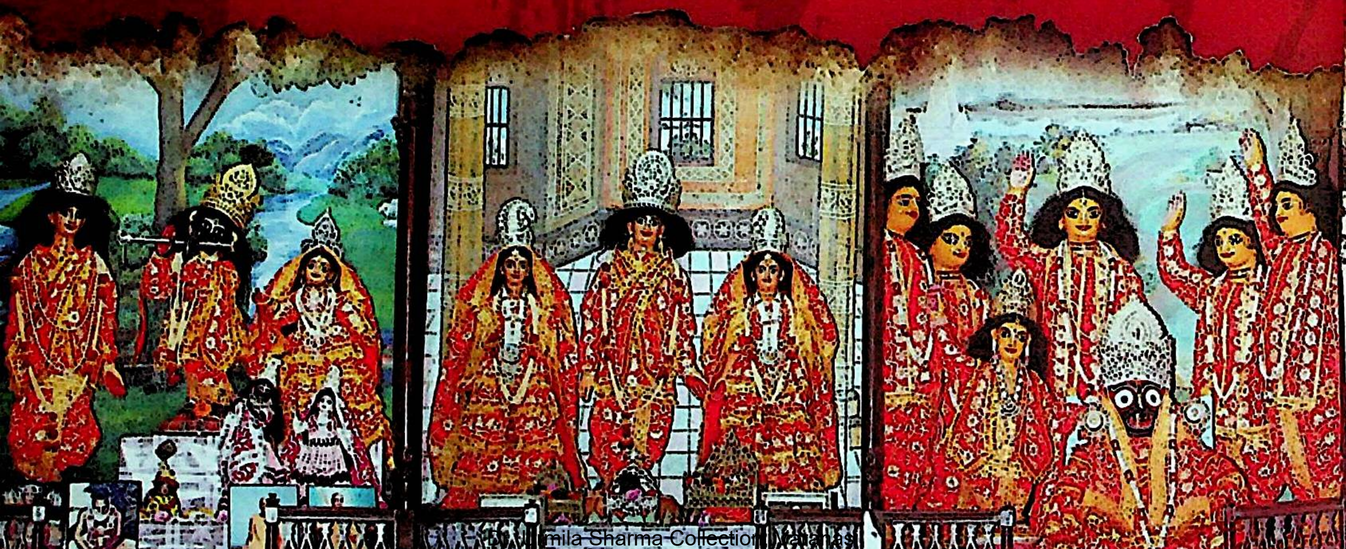
shrine dedicated to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



shrine dedicated to Sakhi Caraṇa dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja

YOGA

When you proceed further into the property, you turn left and enter the main temple which has a 100 feet-high tower. There are three altars in the temple: on the left altar stand Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. On the central altar there are deities of Lord Caitanya as Gaura Nārāyaṇa with His two wives, Viṣṇupriyā and Lakṣmīpriyā, along with a small four-armed deity of Adhokṣaja Viṣṇu. This deity was discovered in 1934 by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura during the excavation for the temple. Adhokṣaja Viṣṇu was the worshipable deity of Jagannātha Miśra, and He sits in front of the deity of Gaura Nārāyaṇa. He is black in color and about eight inches tall with four arms holding the symbols of Lord Viṣṇu: disc, club, conchshell, and lotus. On the sides of this deity are goddesses Lakṣmī-devī and Bhū-devī. On the right altar is the Pañca-tattva, and in front of Them is a deity of Lord Jagannātha.

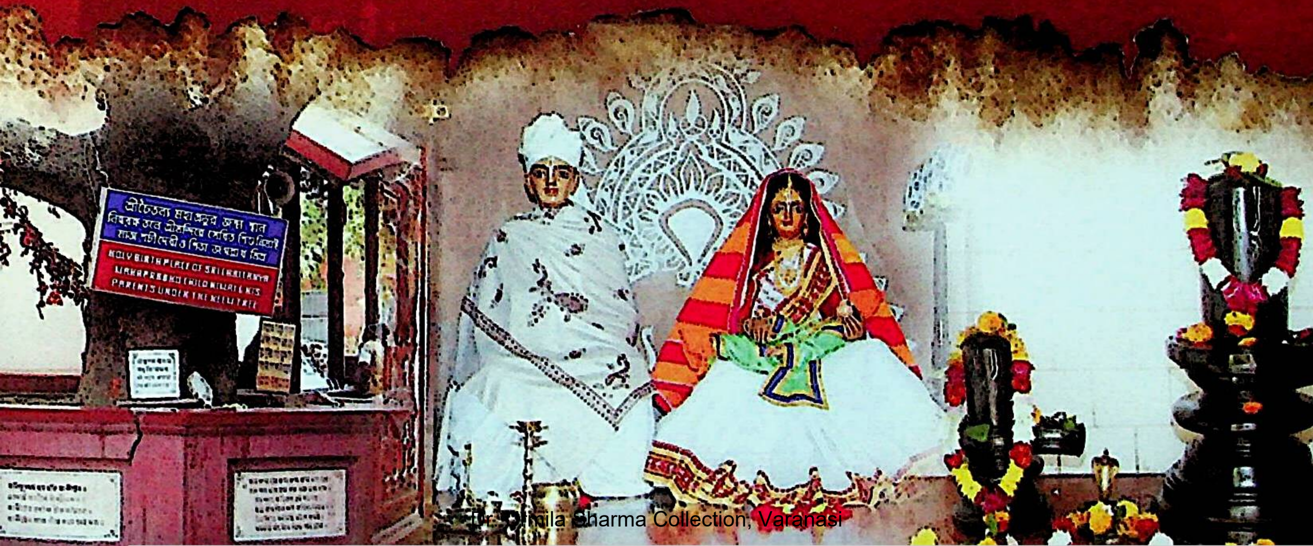


PĪṬHA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

After walking straight through the *darśana* area you will see a small house and a neem tree towards your right. Under this tree Lord Viśvambhara took birth on the evening of *pūrṇimā-tithi* during the month of Phālguna (February-March) in 1486. This present tree is said to be a cutting of the original tree. To mark the birthplace there is a small house next to the tree with deities of Lord Caitanya's father, Jagannātha Miśra, and His mother, Śacī-devī, holding baby Nimāi on her lap.

Ten meters (30 feet) north from the appearance place (directly behind the small house) is a small temple with two Śiva-liṅgas. The smaller one on the left is Gopīśvara Śiva who admits one to the Lord's service. The larger one on the right is Kṣetra-pāla Śiva who is the protector of the *dhāma*. It is recommended that the devotees pray to these deities at the beginning of their *parikramā* (or of their stay in Māyāpur) that the *dhāma* and *gaura-premā* be revealed within their hearts.


HOLY BIRTH PLACE OF SRI CHAITANYA
MAHAPRABHU CHILD NIMAI & HIS
PARENTS UNDER THE NEEM TREE

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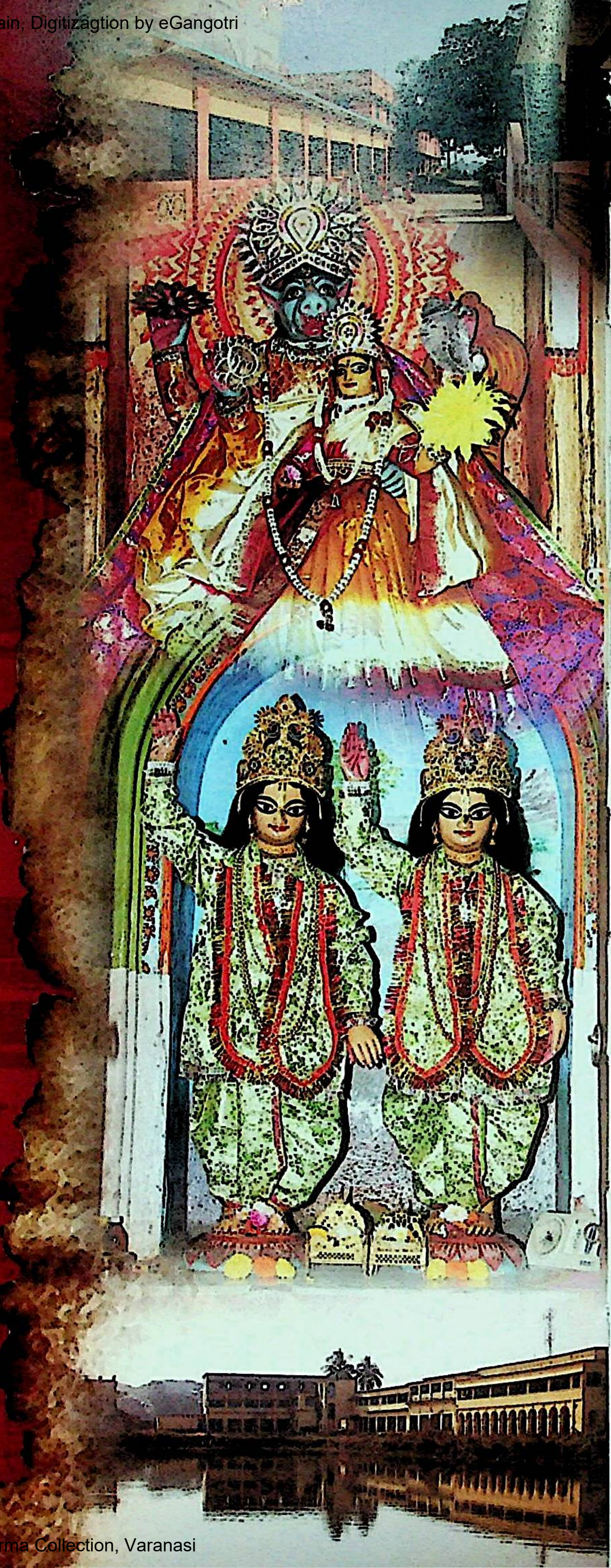
YOGA-PĪṬHA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

In front of the main temple sanctuary there is a big *kīrtana* hall, and at the rear of that hall is the temple of Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṁha and Gaura-Gadādhara deities. Next to the temple complex, to the southern side of the main temple, is Gaura-kuṇḍa.



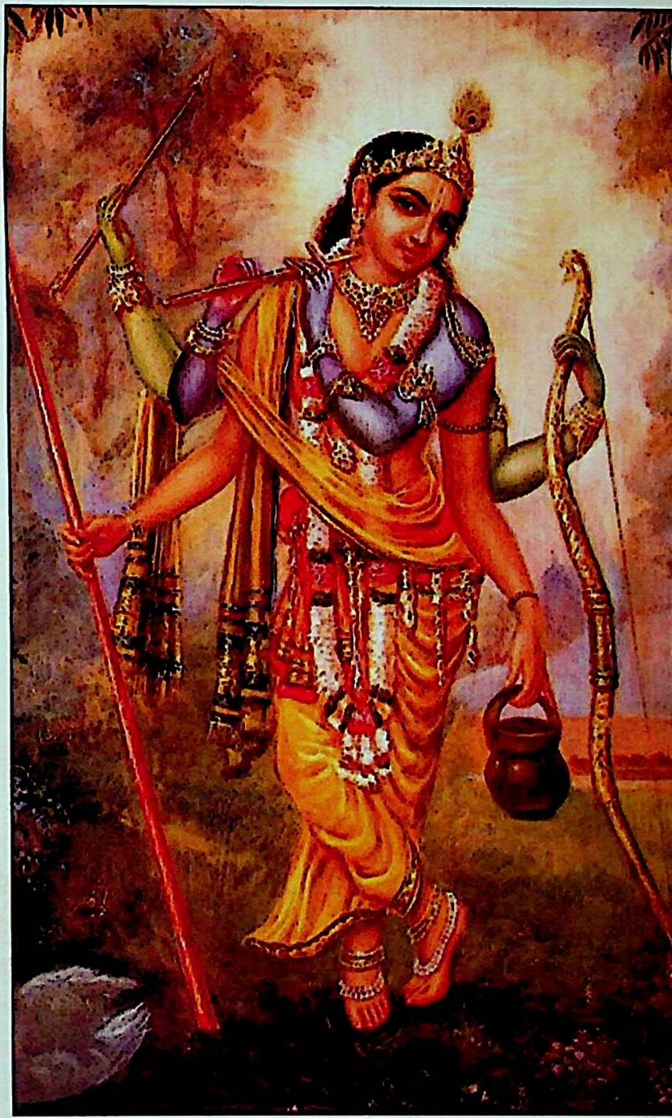
ŚRĪ ŚRĪVĀSA ĀṄGANA: THE HOME OF ŚRĪVĀSA PAṆḌITA

This place is also known as Khola-bhāṅga-ḍāṅgā, the place where Chand Kazi's men broke a *mṛdaṅga*. At Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, Gaurāṅga and His associates started the *saṅkīrtana* movement. Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu would dance in ecstasy here.

> Every night for one year Lord Caitanya and His associates would perform ecstatic sankirtana behind closed doors.

When you enter the compound, walk to the right to enter the temple marking the location where Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura's house once stood. On the altar there are deities of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa on the left, and Gaura-Nitāi on the right. In the center there is a deity of Mahāprabhu in His *mahā-prakāśa* form. Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura is holding an umbrella over Him and Gadādhara Paṇḍita is waving a *cāmara* fan. Mahāprabhu is in the mood of the Supreme Lord of the universe. This deity commemorates the pastime when Lord Caitanya showed His *mahā-prakāśa* form by exhibiting His different incarnations and fulfilling His devotees' desires. While doing so He accepted worship for twenty-one hours, displaying His divine form to all His devotees in a manner just suitable for each of them. There is also a ten-inch Lord Nṛsiṁha deity on the central altar.

At Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, Lord Caitanya showed Nityānanda Prabhu His six-armed form holding a bow and arrow, a flute, a water pot, and a *daṇḍa*.



ŚRĪ ŚRĪVĀSA AṄGANA

DARŚANA TIMES: 8.30-11.00 a.m. and 3.30-8.30 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: It is 250 meters north from Yoga-pīṭha, or one and a half kilometers from ISKCON, going up Bhaktisiddhānta Road. It is on the right side of the road and has an ornate main gate.

PRESIDING DEITIES: The main temple is on the right as you enter the main gate. It stands where Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita's house was located.

On the left altar are Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya.

The center altar depicts the *mahā-prakāśa* pastime of Caitanya Mahāprabhu where He revealed Himself as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Lord Caitanya is sitting on the throne, Gadādhara Paṇḍita is fanning Him with a *cāmara*, and Lord Nityānanda is holding an umbrella over His head.

On the right altar, Lord Nityānanda and Lord Caitanya are leading all the devotees in the *kīrtana* that went to Chand Kazi's palace to protest his ban on *saṅkīrtana*.

This place is also known as "Khola-bhāṅga-ḍāṅgā", the place where the *mṛdaṅga* was broken and you can sometimes see a broken *mṛdaṅga* on the right altar. Śrīvāsa Āṅgana was the center of Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* pastimes, just as Yoga-pīṭha was the center of Lord Caitanya's childhood and boybood pastimes.

শ্রী শ্রীবাস অঙ্গন
SRI SRIVAS ANGAN
(KHOL BHANGAR DANGA)

Śrī Śrīvāsa Āṅgana
ENTRANCE

Śrī Advaita Bhavan

Outside the main temple at Śrīvāsa Āṅgana you can see two small temples about 30 meters away, both within the same compound. The one on your left is Śrī Advaita Bhavan.

The small temple marks the place where Śrī Advaita lived, and houses the deity of Advaita Ācārya sitting at the feet of Lord Caitanya. At this place he offered prayers imploring the Lord to descend. He would sit on the bank of the Gaṅgā, worship *śālagrāma-śilās* and beg Kṛṣṇa to appear.

Śrī Advaita Ācārya taught his students *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* at this place. Viśvarūpa, the elder brother of Viśvambhara, was one of his pupils. At this time great Vaiṣṇavas such as Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Candraśekhara, and Murāri Gupta would come and hear Śrī Advaita speak about Kṛṣṇa. After Lord Caitanya accepted *sannyāsa*, Advaita Ācārya moved back to Śāntipura, where he was originally from.

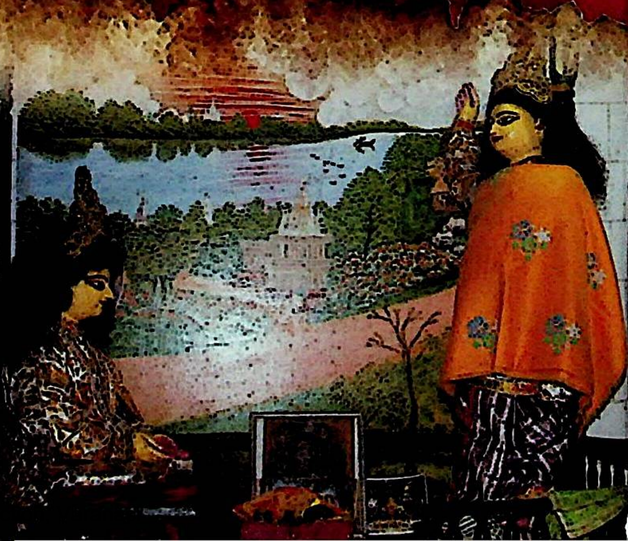
Śri Advaita Bhavan

Practical Guide

Darśana times: 8.30-11.00 a.m. and 3.30-8.30 p.m.

Directions: You can see this temple from the courtyard of Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, thirty meters to the north.

Presiding deities: Lord Caitanya (standing) and Advaita Ācārya (sitting and offering).



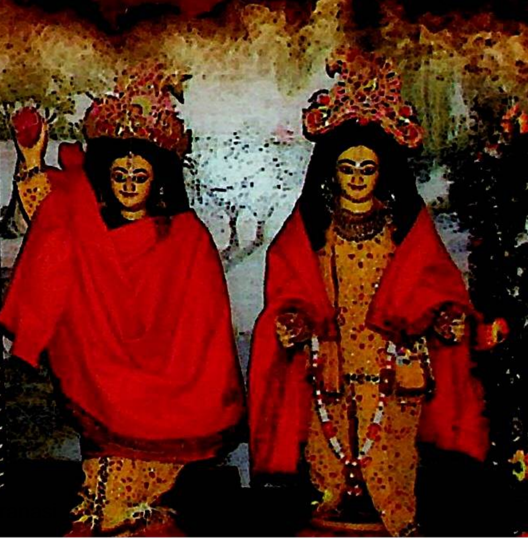
ŚRĪ GADĀDHARA ĀṄGANA

The small temple to the right of Śrī Advaita Bhavan is Śrī Gadādhara Āṅgana. This temple houses the deities of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Gadādhara Paṇḍita. Gadādhara was an incarnation of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and a friend of Nimāi since childhood. Śrī Gadādhara Āṅgana is about 10 meters east of Advaita Bhavan, in the same compound as Śrīvāsa Aṅgana.

ŚRI GADĀDHARA ĀṄGANA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

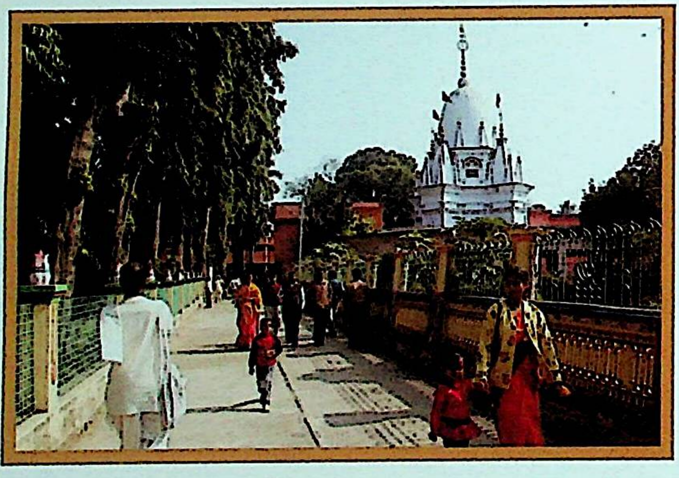
DARŚANA TIMES: 8.30-11.00 a.m. and 3.30-8.30 p.m.
DIRECTIONS: Go ten meters to the right of Advaita Bhavan.
PRESIDING DEITIES: Lord Caitanya (on the left) and Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita (on the right).



ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAṬHA

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established Śrī Caitanya Maṭha in 1918. He called the area of this compound Vrajapattana, which means the place where Vṛndāvana is manifested. This is where the house of Candraśekhara was located. His wife, Mālatī, was the younger sister of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī. They had no children of their own. When Jagannātha Miśra, the father of Lord Caitanya, left this world, Candraśekhara acted as the Lord's father. He accepted Lord Caitanya as his son and took full responsibility for Śacī-mātā.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would perform *kīrtana* at this place. He also performed dramas with Advaita Prabhu, Śrīvāsa, and other devotees in the house of Candraśekhara. Nityānanda played Paurṇamāsī, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita played Nārada Muni, Advaita Ācārya acted as Sadāśiva, Haridāsa Ṭhākura took the role of a guard from Vaikuṇṭha, and Gadādhara Paṇḍita played Lakṣmī-devī.



Śrī Caitanya Maṭha

DARŚANA TIMES: 6.00-12.00 a.m. and 4.00-8.00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Going down Bhaktisiddhānta Road, it is half a kilometer from Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, or two kilometers from ISKCON. The first gate you approach enters from the side of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's *samādhi*. The second gate, a little further down the road, is the entrance for the main temple. To see everything without having to retrace your steps, it is best to enter at the first gate and have your rickshaw pick you up at the second gate.

PRESIDING DEITIES: If you enter the main gate (the second gate when coming from the ISKCON temple) you will see the main temple dedicated to Śrī Śrī Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī approximately 25 meters (75 feet) ahead. On the altar to the right of Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī are two deities of Lord Caitanya with Their right arms raised. When you walk around the deity chamber you will see four altars, one for each of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*: Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī, Śrī Nimbārkācārya and Śrī Rāmānujācārya.

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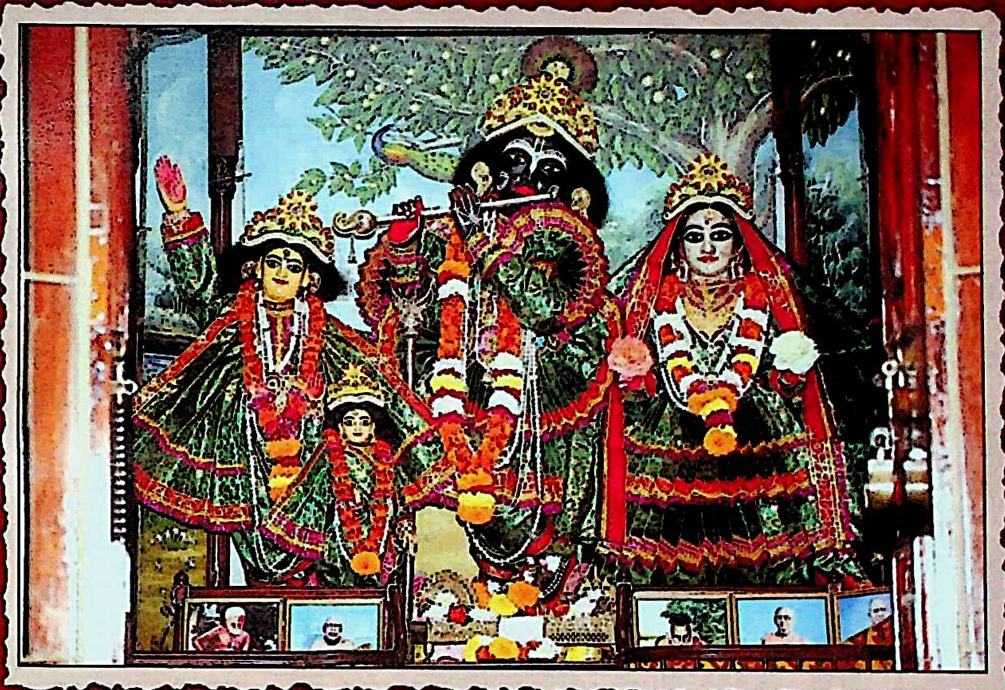
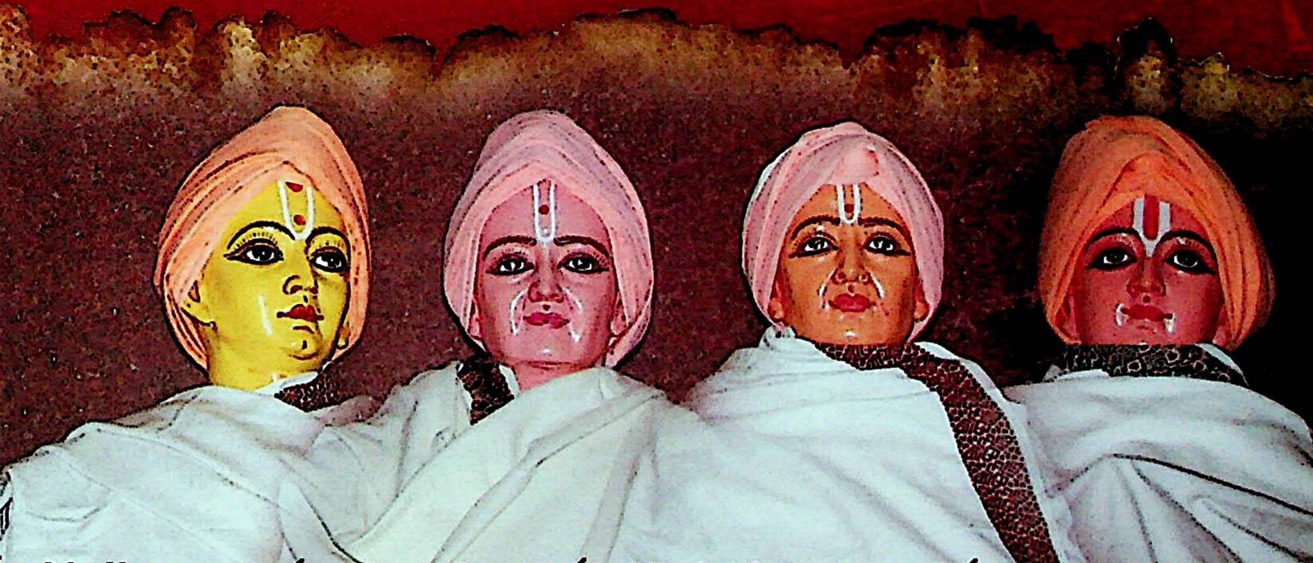
ŚRĪ
AITANYA MAṬHA



Śrī Śrī Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī



rī Madhvācārya, Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī, Śrī Nimbārkācārya and Śrī Rāmānujācārya

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ŚRĪ CAITANYA MAṬHA

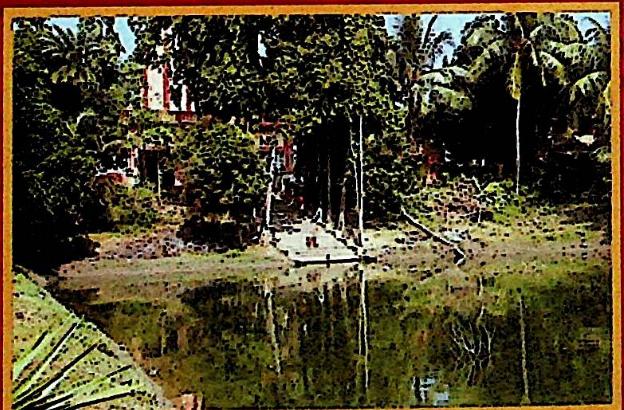
There is a Govardhana Hill in the compound. Next to it is Rādhā-kuṇḍa. This pond is non-different from Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Vṛndāvana.

Next to the Gāndharvikā-Giridhārī temple is Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī's *samādhi* temple. He is the spiritual master of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and left this world on November 19, 1915 in Koladvīpa. Previously his *samādhi* was on the western bank of the Gaṅgā in Kuliyāgrāma at the place called Mutanchada in the present city of Navadvīpa. In 1932, sixteen years after he attained *samādhi*, the Gaṅgā rose to within a few feet of his *samādhi*. At this time Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura had his disciples move the *samādhi* by boat to this place.

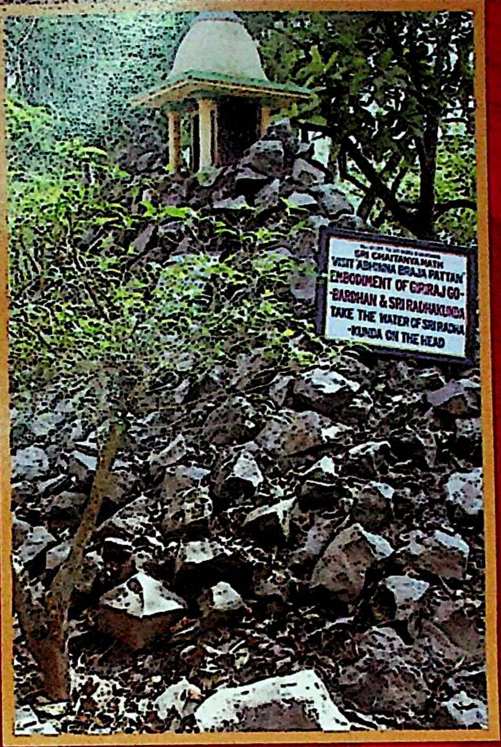
Inside the campus of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha is the residence of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a two-storey building where you can see different items used by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda.

If you enter Śrī Caitanya Maṭha from the first gate (coming from Yoga-pīṭha), you will see the *samādhi* of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. It stands on the right side of the path and is facing Śyāma-kuṇḍa.

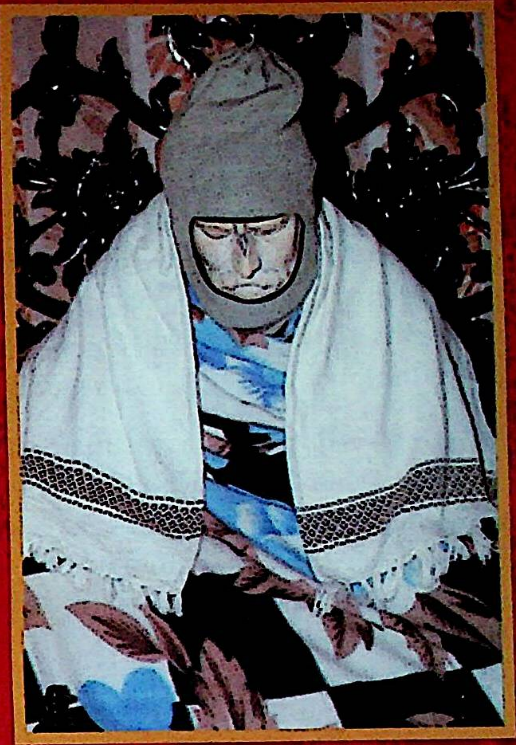
RĀDHĀ-KUṆḌA



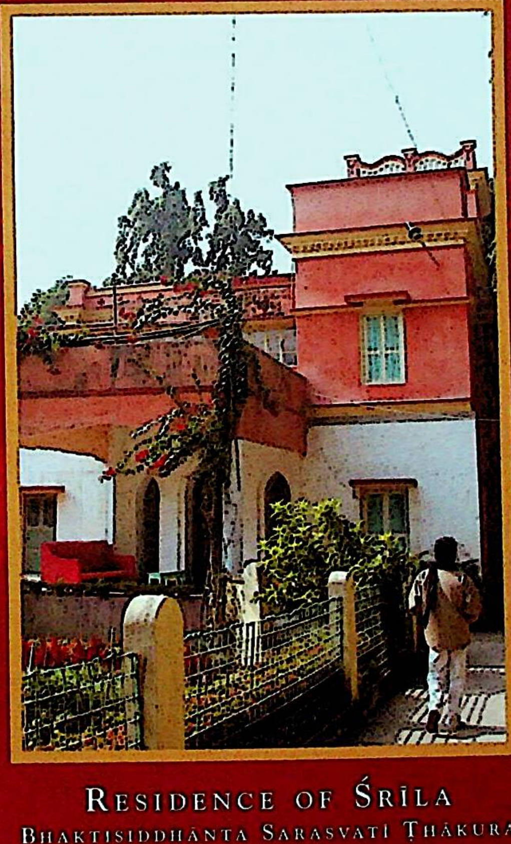
ŚYĀMA-KUṆḌA


SRI CHAITANYA MATH
VISIT "ABHINNA BRAJA PATTAN"
EMBODIMENT OF GIRIRAJ GO-
-BARDHAN & SRI RADHAKUNDA
TAKE THE WATER OF SRI RADHA
-KUNDA ON THE HEAD

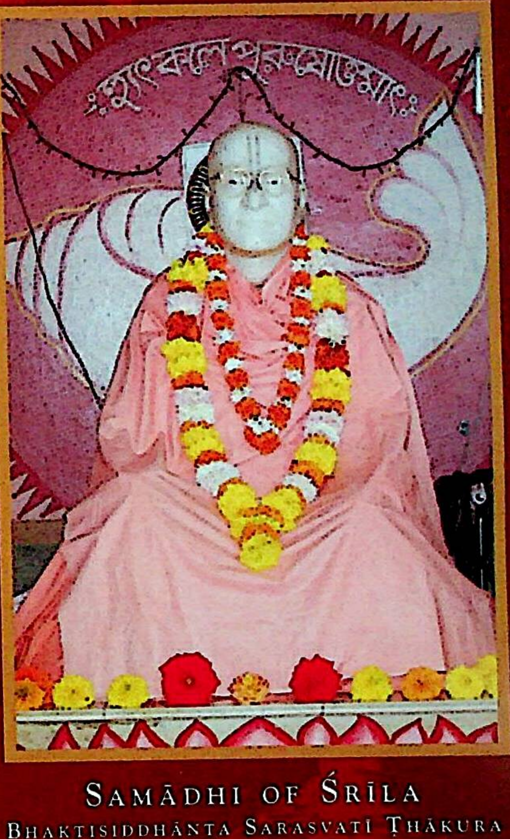
GOVARDHANA HILL



ŚRĪLA GAURAKIŚORA DĀSA BĀBĀJĪ'S SAMĀDHI



RESIDENCE OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ ṬHĀKURA



SAMĀDHI OF ŚRĪLA BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ ṬHĀKURA

VṚDDHA ŚIVA (ŚIVA ḌOBĀ)

Near the road approaching Yoga-pīṭha from the ISKCON temple, there is a culvert just after the Mayapur Polyclinic. When you cross the culvert, take the dirt road on the left. After a few meters is the place which used to be Vṛddha Śiva-ghāṭa.

It is believed that a Śiva-liṅga was found in this area, which is now worshiped behind the birth site of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This Śiva-liṅga is called Vṛddha Śiva, or Kṣetra-pāla, the protector (guardian) of the holy *dhāma*. One should worship the merciful Lord Śiva to obtain the blessing of devotional service to the Supreme Lord. During the time of Lord Caitanya, a temple of Vṛddha Śiva existed at this place but was later covered by the Gaṅgā. This is where the Prauḍhā Māyā energy (*yoga-māyā*) eternally resides. There are two Śiva-liṅgas at this small temple inside the Yoga-pīṭha campus. One of the *liṅgas* was found near the culvert at Mayapur Polyclinic. That place is now known as Śiva Ḍobā.

DIRECTIONS: Turn right ouside the ISKCON main gate and proceed down Bhaktisiddhānta Road. Just after the first turn in the road there is a small bridge and just after that is a path on the left side of the road where you will see some houses. This is the area of Vṛddha Śiva-ghāṭa.

MAHĀPRABHU-GHĀṬA

Six meters north of Vṛddha Śiva is Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa, on a dried-up river bed of the Gaṅgā. At this place Nimāi would take bath daily and play in the water performing many wonderful pastimes. It was also here that Gaṅgā-devī performed austerities, desiring to see the Lord perform His pastimes in her water.

DIRECTIONS: Six meters north of Vṛddha Śiva-ghāṭa is a dried-up riverbed that indicates where the Gaṅgā used to flow.

JAGĀI AND MĀDHĀI-GHĀṬA

Jagāi and Mādhāi were born into a high-class *brāhmaṇa* family in Navadvīpa. Their names were Jagannātha and Mādhavānanda Rāya, the sons of Raghunātha Rāya. Due to bad association they became meat-eaters, drunkards, debauchees, gamblers, and murderers. Because they caused so much disturbance, respectable people avoided them completely.

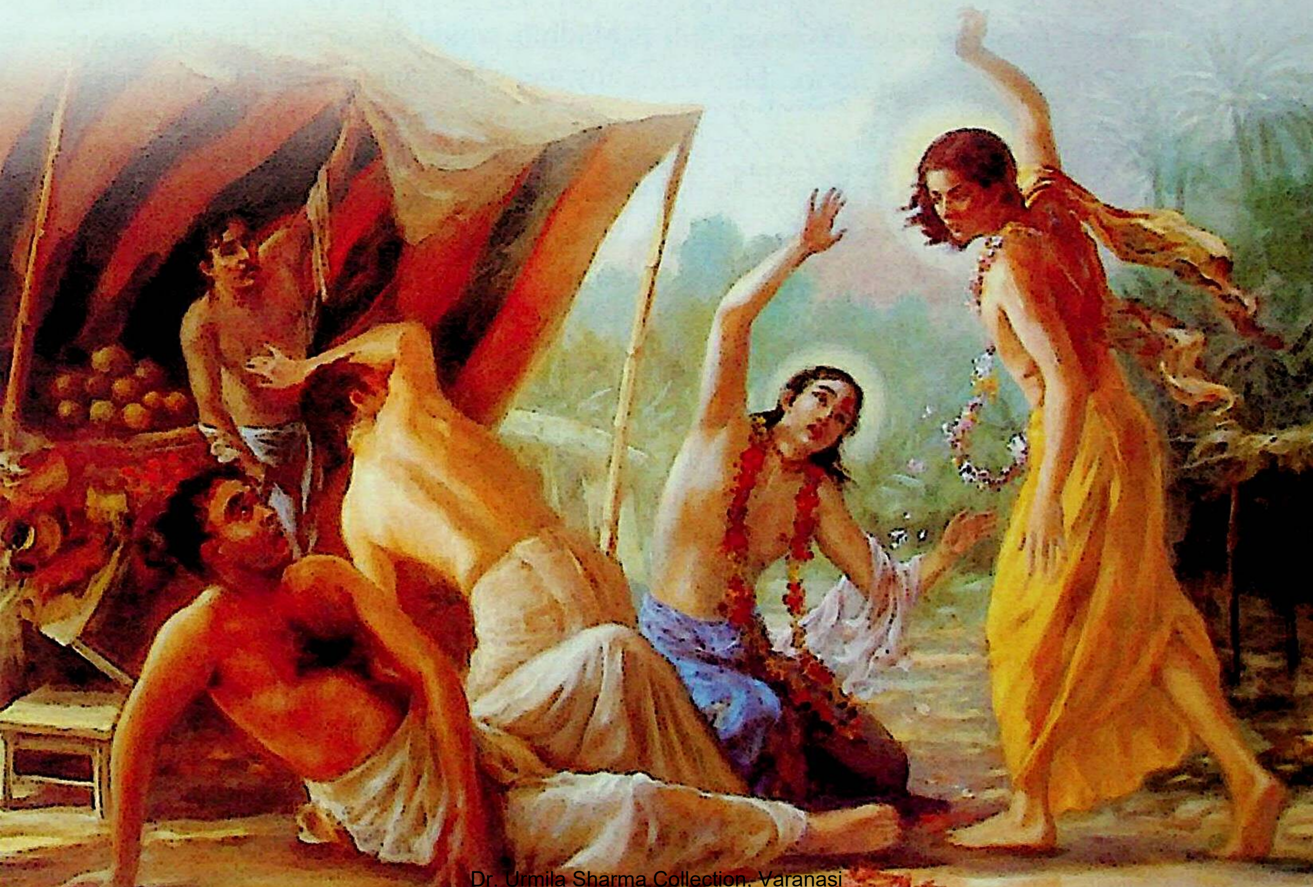
When Lord Caitanya inaugurated the *saṅkīrtana* movement He told Nityānanda Prabhu and Haridāsa Ṭhākura to go door to door and request whomever they met to chant the holy names of the Lord. Since

Jagāi and Mādhāi were the most fallen, the two preachers decided that they were suitable candidates to receive the Lord's mercy. They approached Jagāi and Mādhāi and asked them to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Jagāi and Mādhāi became enraged and chased Nityānanda and Haridāsa, who had to run for their lives. The next day, Mādhāi struck Nityānanda on the head with a piece of an earthen pot, making Him bleed. When Caitanya Mahāprabhu heard this, He immediately came to the spot, ready to punish both brothers. But when the all-merciful Gaurāṅga saw Jagāi's repentant behavior, He immediately embraced him. By seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead face to face and being embraced by Him, both of the sinful brothers were at once cleansed. Thus they received initiation into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* from the Lord and were delivered. This place is approximately 30 meters north of Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa.

adyāpiha cihna āche
caitanya-kṛpāya
'mādhāira ghāṭa bali'
sarva-loke gāya

"By the mercy of Lord Caitanya, the ruins of that place still exist, which everyone refers to as Mādhāi-ghāṭa."

(*Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Madhya-khaṇḍa* 15.94)



After the deliverance of Jagāi and Mādhāi, Mādhāi met with Nityānanda Prabhu in a solitary place and said,

"Oh, My Lord! You are present within the heart of each and every living entity. I have harmed many such living entities. If I knew all whom I have harmed then I could beg forgiveness from them, but I do not know as there have been so many. Please tell me how all those people, against whom I have committed so many offenses, might become pleased with me. If You are merciful upon me then kindly advise me what to do."

Lord Nityānanda replied, "Please listen, I will instruct you. Regularly go and clean the bathing *ghāṭa* on the Gaṅgā. When the people take bath there happily then all of them will bless you. If you serve Gaṅgā-devī who eradicates all offenses then what more good fortune is there for you than doing this service? You should also offer obeisances to everyone with great humility. If you do this then all will forgive you for your offenses." After receiving this advice Mādhāi circumambulated Lord Nityānanda many times and then left. Everyone saw how Mādhāi was preparing the bathing *ghāṭa* on the Gaṅgā very nicely while chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and shedding tears.

Mādhāi would show much respect to anyone who came to the Gaṅgā and offer them his humble obeisances. He would beg for forgiveness saying, "I have committed many offenses, knowingly and unknowingly unto you. Kindly excuse me for all my offenses and bless me."

Everyone would cry when they saw the tears of Mādhāi and would remember Lord Govinda. Mādhāi began performing severe austerities there and became famous as a *brahmacārī*. He stayed on the bank of the Gaṅgā absorbed in her *darśana* and with the help of a *kodāla* (spade) he worked hard repairing the *ghāṭa*. By the mercy of Lord Caitanya the ruins of that place are still visible and known by all as Mādhāi-ghāṭa.

DIRECTIONS: Thirty meters north of Mahāprabhu-ghāṭa.

BĀRAKOṆĀ-GHĀṬA

At this place Mahāprabhu studied and discussed scriptures. He also taught His students Sanskrit grammar here. During the time of Lord Caitanya, Navadvīpa was India's eastern center for Sanskrit and Vedic studies. This *ghāṭa* is said to have been originally constructed by Viśvakarmā, the architect of the demigods.

It was a most beautiful *ghāṭa* with many gardens, flowering creepers and chirping birds, creating a peaceful and transcendental atmosphere. There were five temples and five Śiva-liṅgas here during Lord Caitanya's time. At this place Lord Caitanya defeated Keśava Kāśmīrī.

DIRECTION: Ten meters north of Jagāi and Mādhāi-ghāṭa.

NAGARIYĀ-GHĀṬA

Lord Caitanya came here with His huge *saṅkīrtana* party on His way to defeat Chand Kazi. He would also bathe here on His way home from the school of Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita, under whom He studied for two years. Sometimes the Lord would perform water sports with His schoolfriends at this place. Mother Śacī-devī first saw Lakṣmīpriyā at this *ghāṭa* and mentally selected her to be the wife of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Here Nimāi would sometimes splash water on the *brāhmaṇas* while they were chanting their *mantras*. The *brāhmaṇas* would complain to Jagannātha Miśra. Jagannātha Miśra would then come to the *ghāṭa* with a stick in his hand to chastise Nimāi, who would rush home by another route and smear dust and drops of ink on His body. His hair would be dried by the hot sun on the way home, making it appear that He had not been at the *ghāṭa* and that He had, in fact, been studying. Jagannātha Miśra, on his return, would see no visible proof of his son's naughtiness and would not chastise Him.

DIRECTION: Ten meters (thirty feet) north of Bārakoṇā-ghāṭa.

GAṄGĀNAGARA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes this town in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

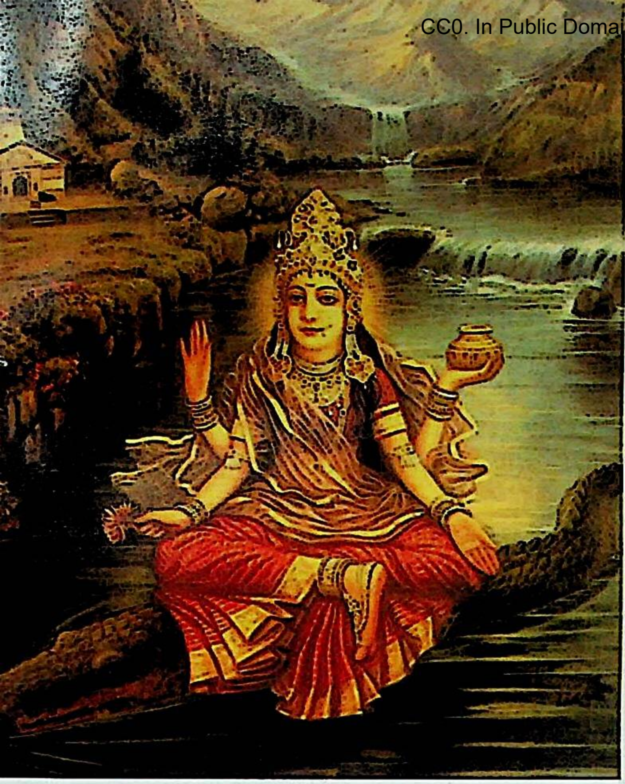
"To the west of here (Māyāpur), on the bank of the River Gaṅgā, stands the town celebrated by the name of Gaṅgānagara. There is the house of Gaṅgādāsa, where my Lord Gaurāṅga took His young *brāhmaṇa* friends and they carried out their studies."

Gaṅgānagara is located to the west of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa which is now known as Ballāl-dīghi. This *kuṇḍa* or pond is no longer visible since it has been used as agricultural land. It is located between Śrī Caitanya Maṭha, Śrīla Bhaktisidhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda's *samādhi* and Murāri Gupta's house. Gaṅgānagara is the place where King Bhagīratha worshiped Gaṅgā-devī and where he remained until Phālguna-pūrṇimā to celebrate the appearance day of Lord Gaurāṅga. Gaṅgānagara was subsequently washed away by the Gaṅgā, which has since retreated to reveal a big tract of land, largely uninhabited. Recently though, some people have started building houses there and we hope that very soon Gaṅgānagara will manifest again.

The city of Gaṅgānagara was established by King Bhagīratha of the Raghu dynasty. Many years ago Mahārāja Bhagīratha pleased Gaṅgā-devī by his austerities and she agreed to descend to earth and deliver his ancestors who were burnt to ashes by the wrath of Kapila Muni. Bhagīratha was leading the way from the Himālayas down to the ocean by blowing his conchshell and Gaṅgā followed him, making her course towards the ocean. At one point King Bhagīratha turned back and saw that Gaṅgā was no longer following him. The king searched for her and saw that she had stopped at Navadvīpa-dhāma. King Bhagīratha became very worried because his ancestors' ashes were still more than a hundred kilometers away. If Gaṅgā refused to flow any further then how would his ancestors be delivered? King Bhagīratha therefore started to perform *tapasya* to please Gaṅgā-devī. Seeing his severe austerity Gaṅgā-devī was pleased and appeared in front of the king. Bhagīratha was very happy to see mother Gaṅgā personally and said to her,

"My dear mother! You have stopped here! The ashes of my departed ancestors are lying more than a hundred kilometers ahead. If you stop now, how will my forefathers be delivered?"

Mother Gaṅgā replied, "My dear son! You should wait here without anxiety for some days. I have come to Navadvīpa-dhāma during the month of Māgha (January-February) and I will stay here until the end of the Phālguna month (February-March).



Mother Gaṅgā

At that time I will proceed and deliver your forefathers. Bhagīratha! I am coming from the lotus feet of the Lord. This Navadvīpa-dhāma is the abode of my Lord and I feel much satisfaction here. The appearance of my Lord is on Phālguna-pūrṇimā day. On that day I will follow a *vrata* here, then only will I follow you. Do not fear."

Bhagīratha, the best of the Raghu dynasty, stayed in Gaṅgānagara until Phālguna-pūrṇimā. Anyone who observes a *vrata* (spiritual vow) on Phālguna-pūrṇimā and stays in Gaṅgānagara to take bath in the Gaṅgā and worship Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu will be delivered along with his forefathers. This place is very glorious because Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu has danced here many times.

One who fasts, takes bath in the Gaṅgā here and worships Gaurāṅga will cross over the ocean of material existence along with one thousand of his ancestors and attain Goloka Vṛndāvana after death, no matter where he dies.

The houses of Gaṅgādāsa and Sañjaya, two associates of Mahāprabhu, were situated in Gaṅgānagara. Near Bharadvāja-ṭilā there is a primary school beside which is a dirt road that goes to the field. Devotees go on *pañca-krośa-parikramā* on this road. If you proceed about two hundred meters, you will see a raised piece of land on your left which is now used for growing rice. This land is believed to be the residence of Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita who had a school at which Śrīmān Mahāprabhu studied during His childhood from the age of eight to ten. Next to Gaṅgādāsa Paṇḍita's house was the house of Mukunda Sañjaya and his brother. Śrīmān Mahāprabhu opened His school in this house.

Directions: It is said this place is located in the open field next to the Śrīdhāma Māyāpur Post Office which is on the corner just past Yoga-pīṭha. While this is the location accepted as being the place, it is also said that this *ghāṭa* is presently covered by the Gaṅgā. In the map dated 1500, it is shown as the last *ghāṭa* and marks the border of Antardvīpa with Māyāpur.

BHARADVĀJA-ṬILĀ

tato gatvā bharadvāja-
sthānaṁ saṅkīrtayan harim
tato māyāpurāvāsaṁ
praviveśa svayaṁ hariḥ

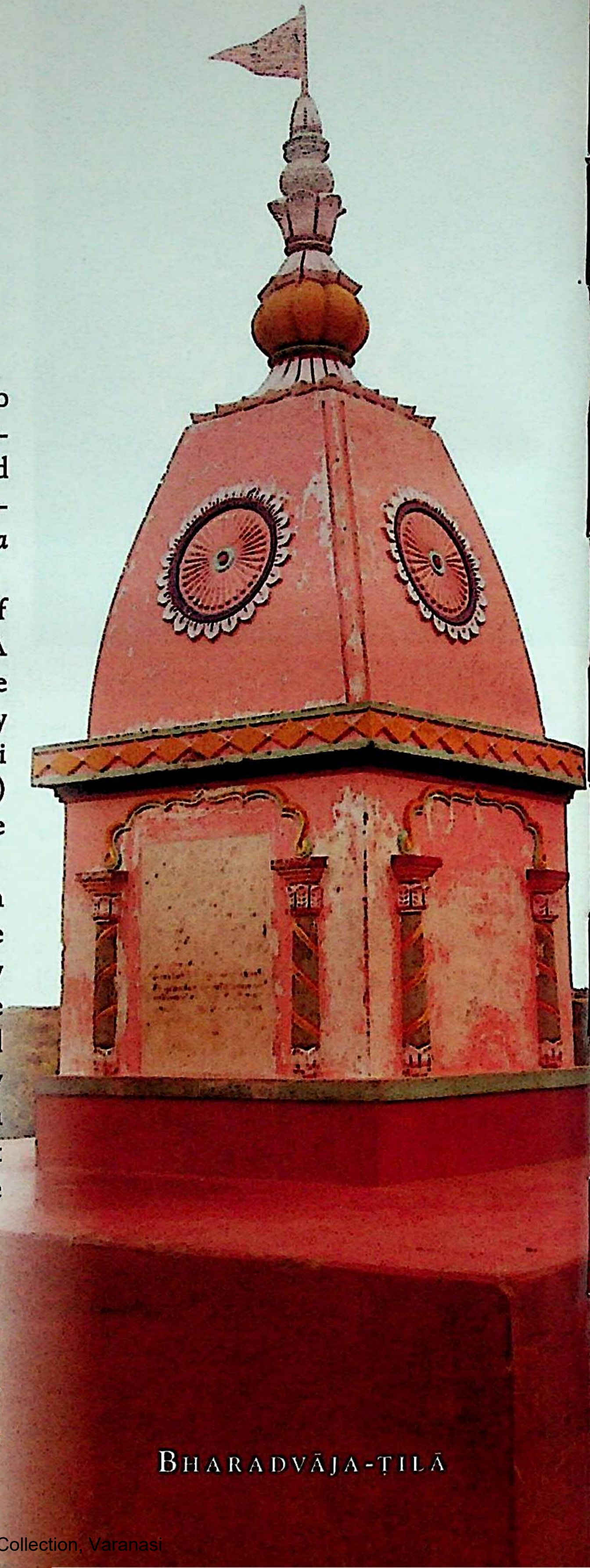
"Lord Gaurahari then went to Bharadvāja-sthāna and performed *hari-saṅkīrtana*. Then He personally entered the abode of Māyāpur." (*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.56)

This place is located at the end of the village called Bhārui-ḍāṅgā. A monument has been constructed there by the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust (BVSCT). Bharadvāja Muni was sitting on a raised *ṭilā* (hillock) performing his *gaura-bhajana*, therefore this place is called Bharadvāja-ṭilā.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*: "There (in Gaṅgānagara), one can see the lovely hill known as Bharadvāja-ṭilā, where the great sage Bharadvāja worshiped Lord Gaura. The sage ultimately attained ecstatic love for Lord Caitanya and then wrote scriptural verses that bestowed the gift of devotional service unto many materialistic people."

BHARADVĀJA MUNI RECEIVED DARŚANA OF LORD GAURĀṄGA

Īśāna Ṭhākura explained to Śrī Śrīnivāsa that this village is known as


BHARADVĀJA-ṬILĀ

Bhārui-ḍāṅgā. Previously Bharadvāja-ṭilā was situated here. After travelling to many *tīrthas* including the *samudra* (the great ocean), Bharadvāja Muni came to a place called Cakra-daha. It is now known as Chākdaha and is situated on the bank of the Gaṅgā. From there he visited Navadvīpa-dhāma. Upon seeing the beauty of Navadvīpa the *muni* became very ecstatic. He settled here on top of this *ṭilā* (hillock) in a very simple and humble manner, worshiping Lord Gaurāṅga. Being pleased by the pure love of Bharadvāja Muni, Lord Gaurahari revealed to him His most wonderful form. The sage offered his prostrated obeisance as well as many prayers and the Lord told him to ask for any boon he desired. The *muni* replied, "O my Lord! My only prayer is that You please bless me so that I will see Your manifested pastimes here in Navadvīpa-dhāma."

The Lord said, "Let it be so. Your desire will be fulfilled. You will have My *darśana* during My manifested pastimes." Saying this, the Lord disappeared from the vision of the sage, who fell to the ground offering his humble prostration to Navadvīpa-dhāma before continuing his pilgrimage.

Bharadvāja Muni was sitting on a raised *ṭilā* (hillock) while engaged in his *gaura-bhajana*, therefore this place is called Bharadvāja-ṭilā.

(Bhakti-ratnākara)

MURĀRI GUPTA'S HOUSE

When you walk to the north from Yoga-pīṭha, before reaching Śrīvāsa Āṅgana, there is a road on your right. Follow that road for half a kilometer and on your right you will see a small temple. Murāri Gupta's house was located here.

Sītā, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān

There is a small temple here with deities of Sītā, Rāma, Lakṣmaṇa and Hanumān, installed by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. There is also a deity of Lord Nārāyaṇa, which was found when the temple was excavated, but its age is unknown. This deity has now moved to the Caitanya Maṭha and is being worshiped there.

PṚTHU-KUṆḌA

Pṛthu-kuṇḍa is situated between Murāri Gupta's house and the Caitanya Maṭha. When you leave Śrīvāsa Āṅgana and walk away from Māyāpur on the Bhaktisiddhānta Road, you will see a large paddy field just before reaching the Caitanya Maṭha. Although no longer visible, Pṛthu-kuṇḍa was situated here and later came to be known as Ballāl-dīghi.

In the *Parikramā-khaṇḍa* of *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described Pṛthu-kuṇḍa as follows:

"Towards the east of Gaṅgānagara, where the houses of Gaṅgādāsa and Sañjaya are located, is a very beautiful lake, now known as Ballāl-dīghi. This place was very important in Satya-yuga when Pṛthu Mahārāja, one of the *śaktyāveśa-avatāras* of the Lord, was ruling the earth planet. To make the planet more suitable for living Pṛthu Mahārāja had started a project to level its surface as some places were low and others high. When Pṛthu Mahārāja came to Navadvīpa, his workers saw a bright effulgence all around. They

informed the king and he personally came and noticed it as well. Because Pṛthu Mahārāja is a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra* (empowered incarnation) he knew through meditation that this area was Navadvīpa-dhāma. In order to acknowledge the glories of this holy place Pṛthu Mahārāja ordered the digging of a very beautiful lake. This lake was called Pṛthu-kuṇḍa by the people of Navadvīpa who were very happy to drink its pure transparent water.

Later, King Lakṣmaṇa Sena dug the lake deeper and renovated it, giving it a more pleasing appearance. He did this welfare job desiring the deliverance of his forefathers. Lakṣmaṇa Sena's father was Ballāl Sena, thus the name of this lake became Ballāl-dīghi. *Dīghi* means a big pond or lake.

Directions: Pṛthu-kuṇḍa used to be in the fields on the right side of the Bhaktisiddhānta Road just before the Caitanya Maṭha. It is no longer manifest.

Dr. Umesha Sharma Collection, Varanasi

ŚRĪDHARA ĀṄGANA

śodhitvā taṁ kīrtanādau
śrī-gaurasundaraḥ prabhuḥ
tīrthaṁ dvādaśakaṁ tīrtvā
śrīdharasya gṛhaṁ yayau

"Lord Śrī Gaurasundara, during the time of the first *(ādi) kīrtana* purified Kaṁsa who had taken birth as Chand Kazi and went to the house of Śrīdhara after crossing *dvādaśa-tīrtha* (the twelve *tīrthas*)." *(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.35)*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentions in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"In the center of Madhuvana is the place called Viśrāma-sthala. There stands the cottage of the Lord's devotee named Śrīdhara and also a clear pond. After rectifying the Kazi, the Lord of the three worlds came here with His followers and rested. When will I shout "Hā Gaurāṅga!" at this Viśrāma-sthala? When will I roll upon the ground and cry in solitude? Overwhelmed with emotions of ecstatic love, will I ever see the beautiful Gaurāṅga-sundara drinking water from Śrīdhara's iron pot? And when, by the power of great fortune, will my eyes behold the young son of Śacī in the midst of a rousing *kīrtana* along with Nityānanda, Advaita, Gadādhara, and Śrīvāsa, dancing and begging for ecstatic love at the house of Śrīdhara?"

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya (Parikramā-khaṇḍa) describes:

When Lord Nityānanda took Śrī Jīva on Navadvīpa-maṇḍala Parikramā they reached the house of Śrīdhara, or Kolāvecā Śrīdhara (the banana vendor). This personality is also known as the cowherd boy Kusumāsava in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. Nityānanda Prabhu said, "At this place Mahāprabhu would take rest after completing His dancing and chanting. Therefore this place is known as Viśrāma-sthāna or the place of rest."

When Śrīdhara heard about the arrival of Lord Nityānanda, he immediately came forward and offered prostrated obeisance. He worshiped Lord Nityānanda and said, "O, my Lord! You are very merciful towards this menial servant of Yours. I humbly request You to kindly take rest today at my residence." Lord Nityānanda said, "You are a very fortunate person. Lord Gaurāṅga has personally blessed you. Today all of us will stay here and take rest." Śrīdhara was extremely satisfied to hear this desire of Lord Nityānanda.

Immediately he brought all the ingredients for cooking and had a devotee *brāhmaṇa* cook the feast. First Lord Nityānanda and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura took *prasāda* and after they had concluded their meal, Śrī Jīva very happily honored *prasāda*. When Nityānanda Prabhu reclined on a bed after taking *prasāda*, Śrīdhara, along with his whole family, massaged His divine lotus feet.

PRACTICAL GUIDE

ŚRĪDHARA ĀNGANA

DARŚANA TIMES: All the time

DIRECTIONS: Enter the mango grove at the back of Śrī Jagannātha temple in Rājāpur using the small gate at the rear of the temple. Ahead of you on the right side you will see a small building situated amongst a cluster of trees. This is the place.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

The building indicates the location of Śrīdhara's house. This area is non-different from Madhuvana forest of Vṛndāvana where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had many pastimes with Their *sakhās*, cowherd boyfriends. One of these *sakhās* was Kusumāsava Gopāla *sakhā* who appeared as Śrīdhara in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's pastimes.

Ṣaṣṭhi-tīrtha-kuṇḍa: On the right side of the building you will see a field that is dug out and surrounded by raised edges. This was a *kuṇḍa* in Lord Caitanya's time. Young Nimāi used to play here and also steal bananas from Śrīdhara's nearby banana patch.

Resting place: This place is also known as *viśrāma-sthala* (resting place) as Lord Caitanya would take rest here after performing *kīrtana*.

ṢAṢṬHI-TĪRTHA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"North of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa is the town of Mathurā and the holy place known as Ṣaṣṭhi-tīrtha, which is within the exquisitely beautiful forest of Madhuvana (in Vraja). This is a very vast area populated by many people. May my eyes become purified by viewing this scene."

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya (*Parikramā-khaṇḍa*) describes:

During the afternoon Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura took Śrī Jīva on a tour. He showed him Ṣaṣṭhi-tīrtha (the sixty *tīrthas*). Śrīvāsa explained, "Before the advent of Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga, the demigods came to know that the Lord would very soon appear in Navadvīpa. Viśvakarmā came to Nadia, realizing that Mahāprabhu would be performing *nagara-saṅkīrtana* and walking through the streets of Nadia. The architect of the demigods understood that the Lord along with His associates would become very thirsty. In order to relieve them of thirst Viśvakarmā dug sixty ponds in one night, the last one being in the village of Chand Kazi."

DIRECTIONS: One of these *kuṇḍas* is in Chand Kazi's village and another is here to the side of Śrīdhara's place.

ŚRĪ ĪŚODYĀNA (NANDANA ĀCĀRYA'S HOUSE)

This is where Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda first met. Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha temple is said to mark the site where the house of Nandana Ācārya used to stand. This temple is between the ISKCON temple and the boat ghat to Navadvīpa. The area from the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the Sarasvatī up to the *samādhi* of Śrīla Prabhupāda is known as Īśodyāna, the Lord's garden. This is where Nandana Ācārya had his house.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"In the southern portion of Māyāpur, on the bank of the River Gaṅgā and very near its junction with the River Sarasvatī, is the extensive grove called Īśodyāna, the Lord's garden. May that garden be the place of my eternal devotion.

In this garden, my Lord Śrī Śacīnandana performs His midday pastimes along with His devotees. Seeing the brilliance of this grove, I shall be reminded of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Vraja. May all these areas be eternally visible to my eyes.

Huge trees and dark vines appear very dense. Among the foliage there are various types of birds singing the transcendental glories of Lord Gaura. In the garden, there is a large lake and an extremely opulent temple glowing with pure gold inlaid with diamonds as well as blue and yellow sapphires.

The materialists, with their eyes bewildered by the illusions of material sense perception, and who are envious of the Lord, can never see these groves. Rather, they see only a small piece of land covered with thorns, periodically thrown into utter disruption by the forceful flooding of the river."

(*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

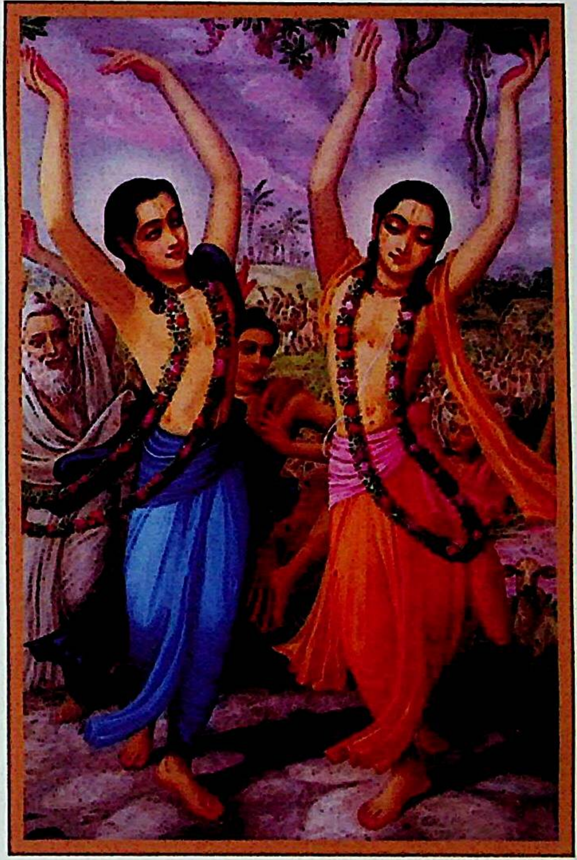
THE MEETING OF ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA AND ŚRĪ NITYĀNANDA AT NANDANA ĀCĀRYA'S HOUSE

jāniyā āilā jhāṭa navadvīpa-pure
āsiyā rahilā nandana-ācāryera ghare

"As soon as Lord Nityānanda realized that Lord Caitanya had manifested Himself, He quickly went to Navadvīpa. When He arrived, He resided in the house of Nandana Ācārya."

(*Caitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-khaṇḍa 3.123*)

Lord Nityānanda was staying in Vṛndāvana, waiting until Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu manifested His *saṅkīrtana* pastimes in Navadvīpa. When Lord Nityānanda came to know that Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu had started His *saṅkīrtana* movement, He traveled to Navadvīpa-dhāma. Nandana Ācārya was very happy to receive Lord Nityānanda at his house where he offered Him a place to stay and also arranged for His *prasāda*. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu understood that Lord Nityānanda had reached Navadvīpa. He felt great happiness within His heart and informed all the Vaiṣṇavas, "O, My dear brothers! Within the next two or three days a great personality will come here." But no one could understand about whom the Lord was talking.



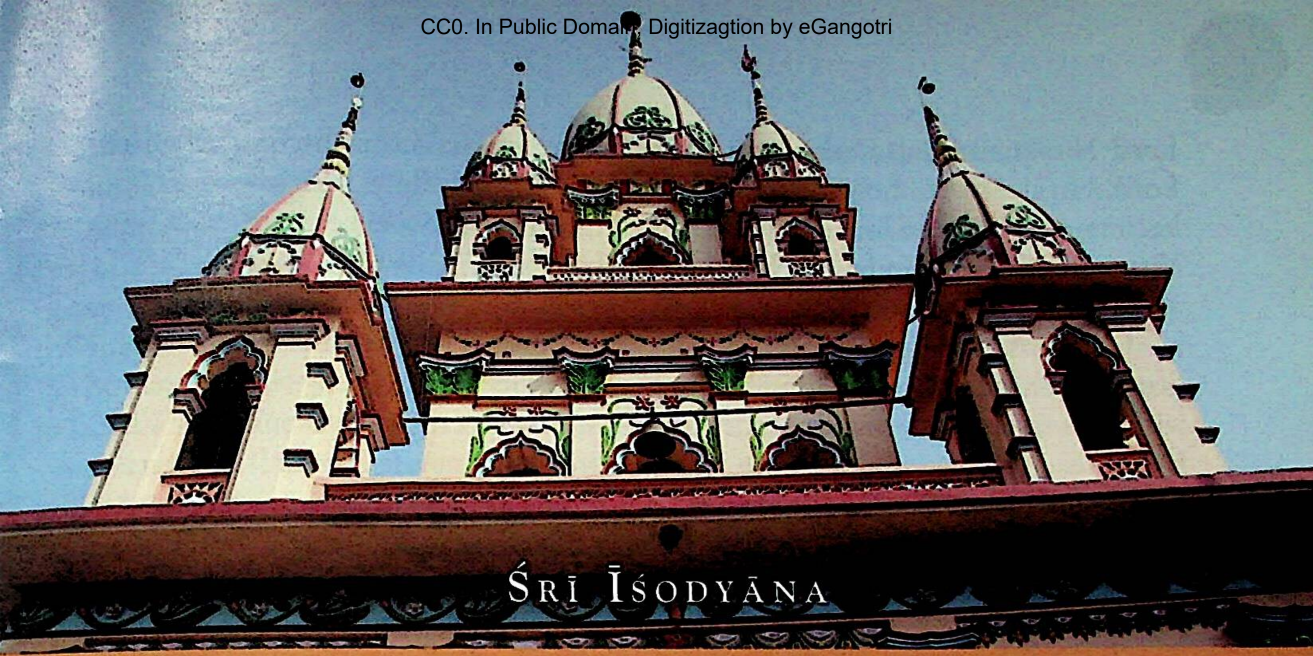
One morning after Lord Gauracandra had concluded His worship of Lord

Viṣṇu, He came to meet with the devotees. The Lord said, "Today I had a very wonderful dream. A great chariot called Tāladhvaja came and stopped in front of My house. Sitting on that chariot was a great personality with a huge body. He was holding a club over His shoulder and in His left hand was a *kamaṇḍalu* pot bound to a stick. He was wearing a blue cloth, had a blue turban on His head, and a wonderful earring was hanging from His left ear. Upon seeing this character I felt He had the mood of Haladhara, Lord Balarāma. He asked me ten or twenty times, 'Is this the house of Nimāi Paṇḍita?' He looked like a great *avadhūta*. I have never seen such a personality. I felt very respectful to Him and asked Him,

'O, great personality!
Who are You?' He
smiled and said,
'I am Your brother.
Tomorrow We will meet
with each other.'

From this dream I think a great person must have come to Navadvīpa. I have told you before that very soon we will meet with a great personality. O, Haridāsa! O, Śrīvāsa! Please go and find out whether He has already arrived." By the order of the Lord both Haridāsa and Śrīvāsa went to search for Him all over Navadvīpa, but they could not find such a personality anywhere. After searching for Him all over for nine hours, they finally came back to Lord Gauracandra and informed Him, "We searched for this personality everywhere, in the houses of all the Vaiṣṇavas, *sannyāsīs* and *gṛhasthas*, even in the homes of all the atheists, but we could not find Him anywhere. We have searched all over Navadvīpa, but we have not gone to other villages." Upon hearing this Lord Gauracandra smiled and explained to them how this personality, Lord Nityānanda, is very confidential. Not everyone can find Him; unless Lord Gaurāṅga Himself reveals Him, He cannot be found. Lord Gaurāṅga said, "All of you come with Me. We will go and search for Him together." Lord Gauracandra along with all the devotees went to Nandana Ācārya's house.

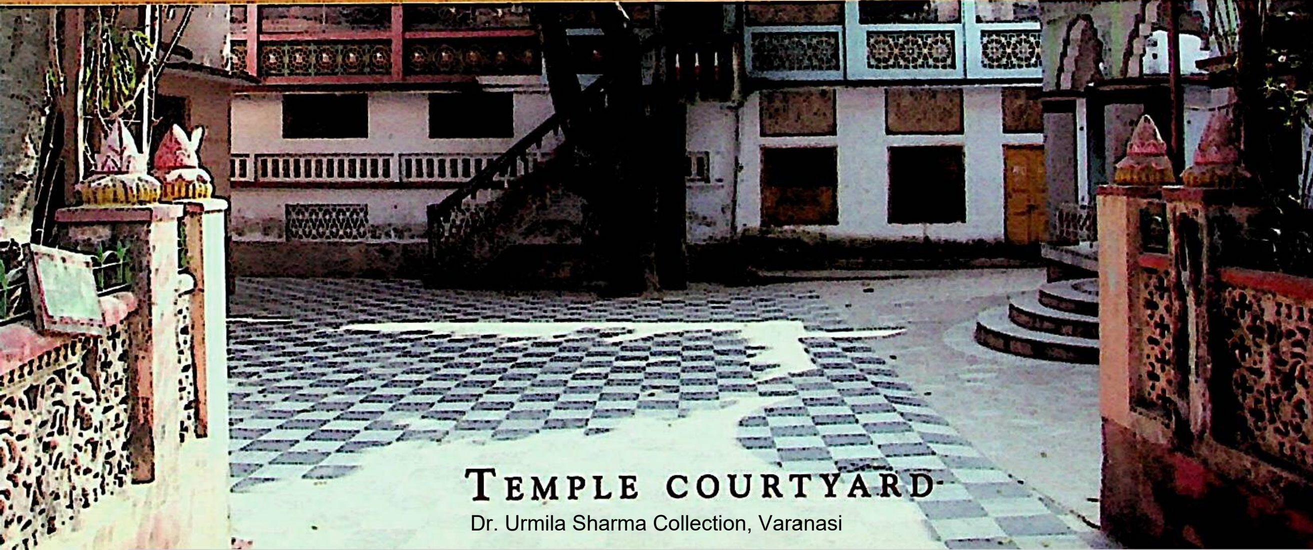
There they saw this great jewel among all persons. He was as effulgent as millions of suns. He was in immense meditative bliss and was always laughing. Mahāprabhu understood His great devotion and along with all His associates offered obeisances to Him. All stood there with respect, no one said a word, they just looked on silently. Lord Viśvambhara stood in front of that personality. He recognized Lord Nityānanda, the Lord of His life.



Śrī Īśodyāna

শ্রীশ্রী গৌর নিত্যানন্দ মন্দির
শ্রীনন্দনাচার্য্য ভবন ❀ শ্রীগৌড়ীয় সঙ্ঘ (রেজিঃ)
NANDANACHARYA BHAVAN

Main gate



Temple courtyard

Lord Nityānanda also recognized His Lord. In ecstasy Lord Nityānanda became stunned and looked upon Lord Viśvambhara with undeviated, focused attention in such a way that it seemed as if He was licking with His tongue, drinking through His eyes, embracing with His arms and smelling through His nose.

Thus Nityānanda became silent and motionless. Everyone was surprised to see this but Lord Gaura Rāya could understand everything. In order to reveal Lord Nityānanda's *svarūpa* to everyone Lord Gauracandra devised a plan. He made an indication to Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita to recite a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Understanding the desire of the Lord, Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita recited the following verse:

barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ
karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ
vaijayantīṁ ca mālām
randhrān veṇor adhara-
sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada-ramaṇaṁ
prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

"Wearing a peacock-feather ornament upon His head, blue *karṇikāra* flowers on His ears, a yellow garment as brilliant as gold, and the Vaijayantī garland, Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited His transcendental form as the greatest of dancers as He entered the forest of Vṛndāvana, beautifying it with the marks of His footprints. He filled the holes of His flute with the nectar of His lips, and the cowherd boys sang His glories." (ŚB 10.21.5)

As soon as Lord Nityānanda heard this verse He immediately fell down and lost His external consciousness. When Lord Nityānanda fainted in ecstasy, Lord Gaurāṅga instructed Śrīvāsa to recite more and more. By hearing again and again Lord Nityānanda regained His external consciousness and started to cry. Hearing the verse repeatedly increased His ecstasy and He started roaring like a lion. He was jumping high in the air and falling to the ground. Everyone was thinking that His bones would break. Even the Vaiṣṇavas were afraid, what to speak of others. Everyone prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa saying, "Please save Him, please save Him!" Lord Nityānanda was rolling on the ground, His whole body drenched with tears. He was looking at the face of Viśvambhara and breathing heavily, experiencing ecstasy within his heart and laughing loudly. Sometimes He was dancing, sometimes He was bending down, sometimes He was beating on his arms and at other times He was jumping which was a very amazing sight. By seeing this most wonderful ecstasy due to madness for Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Gaurāṅga cried along with all the Vaiṣṇavas. Constantly the happiness increased. No one was able to catch hold of Lord Nityānanda and after their failed attempts Lord Viśvambhara Himself took Lord Nityānanda onto His lap. As soon as Lord Nityānanda reached the lap of Viśvambhara He became quiet and surrendered His life to Him. Lord Nityānanda was floating in the water of love of Śrī Caitanya. He looked exactly like Lakṣmaṇa when he was hurt by the *śakti* weapon of Indrajit, and Viśvambhara looked exactly like Rāmacandra, holding His wounded brother on His lap. Lord Nityānanda fainted, pierced by the arrows of *prema-bhakti*. Lord Gauracandra was crying, holding Nityānanda. After some time Lord Nityānanda regained His external consciousness and the devotees started chanting "Hari, Hari" and "*jaya, jaya*."

Nityānanda and Gauracandra just looked at each other without saying anything as tears flowed from Their eyes. Then Lord Gaurāṅga started glorifying Lord Nityānanda by saying, "Today is a very auspicious day because I have seen *bhakti-yoga* in You, which is the essence of all the *Vedas*. Without the energy of Īśvara how can anyone exhibit tears and other symptoms like these? By serving You one will get *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. You have come to purify all fourteen planetary systems. You are the personification of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. Now I understand that Kṛṣṇa has brought You here to give Me Your association which will definitely deliver Me." After glorifying Nityānanda for some time Lord Gaurāṅga asked fearfully, "Kindly tell Me, where have You come from?" Nityānanda, who has a childlike nature and was talking like a child, said, "I had set off for *tīrtha-yātrā* (pilgrimage). I went to see all the holy places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa but wherever I went I saw only empty places without Kṛṣṇa. I asked some gentlemen why this was so, 'Why are all these *siṁhāsanas* empty? O, my dear brothers! Please tell me in which direction Kṛṣṇa has gone?' They replied that Kṛṣṇa had gone to Gauḍa-deśa. 'Just a few days ago He went to Nadia after visiting Gayā. There is a great *hari-saṅkīrtana* happening in Nadia.' Some said, 'Lord Nārāyaṇa has appeared there, I heard the deliverer of fallen souls has appeared in Nadia!' Hearing this great news a fallen soul like Me has come here." Mahāprabhu said, "We are all very fortunate that a great devotee like You has arrived here. By seeing the flow of bliss in You we have been blessed today."

Thus Lord Nityānanda and Lord Gauracandra met each other at Nandana Ācārya's house. Whoever listens to this description will become free from material bondage and receive pure kṛṣṇa-bhakti.

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ŚRĪ ĪŚODYĀNA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: Turn left outside the main gate of ISKCON and proceed down Bhaktisiddhānta Road towards Hulor Ghat. It is the first temple on the left side of the road and has an ornate main gate.

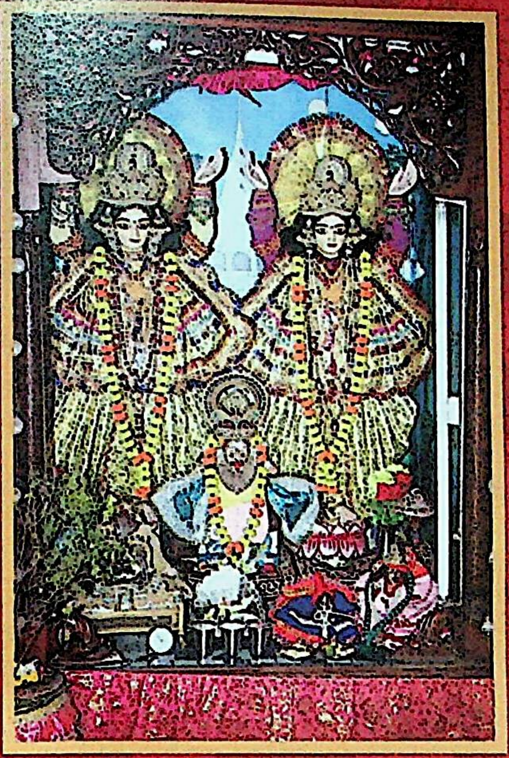
PRESIDING DEITIES: The temple is at the end of the main hall on the left just inside the front gate.

The center altar has beautiful big neem deities of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi and also Nṛsiṁhadeva.

The left altar has two deities of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu with their right arm raised and Giri Govardhana.

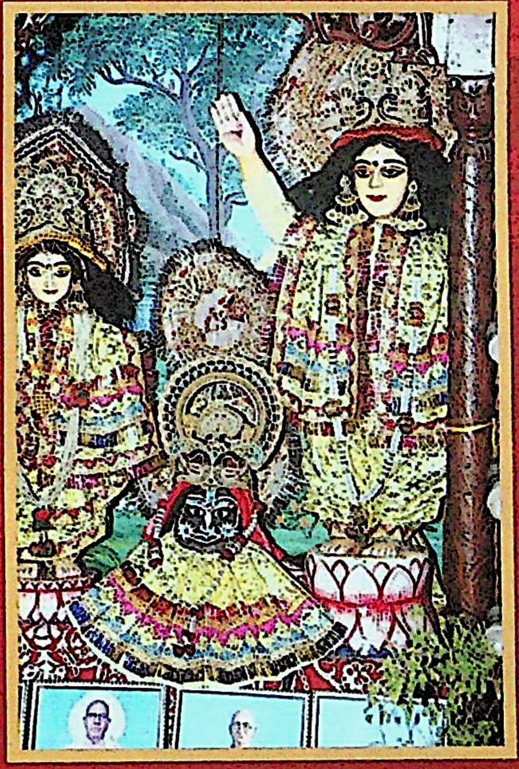
Śrī Śrī Rādhā Vinoda Bihārī preside on the right side of the altar. It is worth going close to see Them as They are very charming.

PRESIDING DEITIES



ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GAURA-NITĀI

ŚRĪ NṚSIṀHADEVA



TWO DEITIES OF GAURĀṄGA MAHĀPRABHU

ŚRĪ ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ VINODA BIHĀRĪ

Śrī Sīmantadvīpa

This island represents *śravaṇam*-hearing.

Places to visit on this island are the Sīmantinī-mandira, Chand Kazi's *samādhi*, Śrī Jagannātha temple, Mayamārī and the Madana Gopāla temple.

(Śrīdhara Āṅgana is near the Jagannātha temple. There is some difference of opinion about which island Śrīdhara Āṅgana is situated on, whether Antardvīpa or Sīmantadvīpa. We have chosen to include Śrīdhara Āṅgana in the Antardvīpa chapter.)

This island Sīmantadvīpa was also known as Simuliyā-grāma and is located south of the Gaṅgā. When Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu took Śrī Jīva on *parikramā*, He mentioned that this island would be taken over by the Gaṅgā. Only one place would be visible where materialistic people would worship Pārvatī known as Sīmantinī. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhakura has stated in *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*, "North-west of Mathurā, I shall see the splendor of the island of Sīmantadvīpa, whose border is the bank of the River Gaṅgā. There, goddess Pārvatī-devī was distressed and gained relief by placing the dust from the lotus feet of Lord Gaura upon the part of her hair (*sīmanta*)."

WHY IS THIS ISLAND NAMED SĪMANTADVĪPA?

The reason why this island is called Sīmantadvīpa has been described in scripture as follows. Once upon a time during Satya-yuga, Lord Śiva started to dance chanting the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga. Goddess Pārvatī asked Mahādeva, "What is this name, Gaurāṅga, that you are chanting and which is causing you to dance? My heart is melting to see your wonderful dance and to hear your chanting of the name of Gaurāṅga. Until now all the *mantras* and *tantras* I have heard simply give troubles and problems to the living entities. Kindly tell me about Gaurāṅga. I will make my life

sīmanta-dvīpam āsādya
tvaṁ hi devi sanātani
dadraṣṭha sundaraṁ rūpaṁ
gaurāṅgasya mahātmanaḥ

“O Devī! You had darśana of the beautiful form of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in Sīmantadvīpa.”

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 33)

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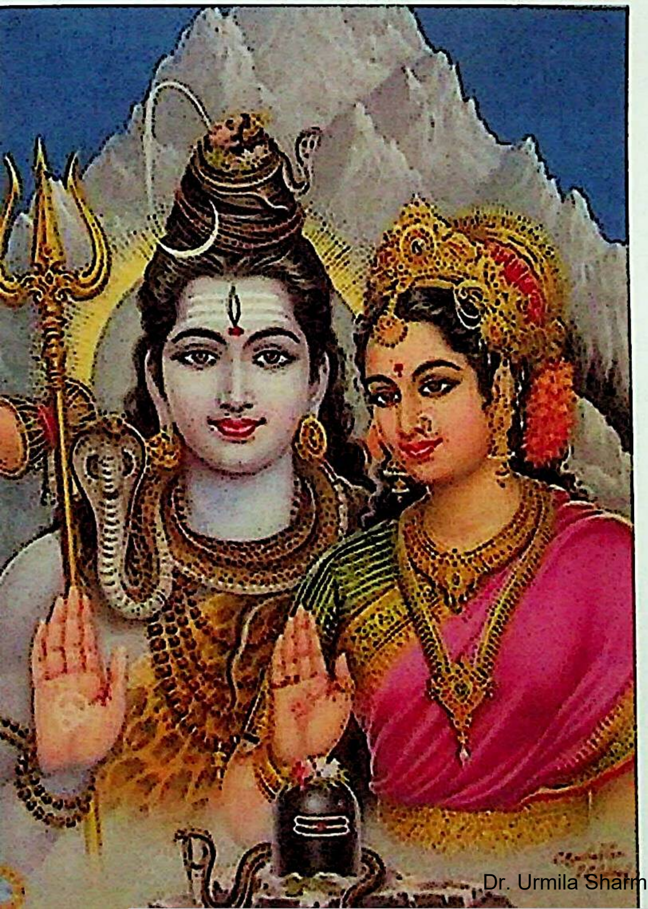
successful by worshiping Gaurāṅga.” Hearing these words from Pārvatī, Mahādeva spoke while meditating upon Lord Gaurāṅga, “You are a plenary portion of Rādhā who is the origin of all potency (*ādi-śakti*). Now I will tell you a secret truth. During this Kali-yuga Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, accepting the mood of Rādhārāṇī, will take birth as Gaurāṅga in Māyāpur from the womb of Śacī-devī. Lord Gaurāṅga will be mad from chanting the holy name of the Lord, *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. He will distribute the wealth of *prema* to everyone without considering who is qualified and who is not. If a person does not come to float in the flood of this holy name but spends his life in great luxury, he is most unfortunate. I am floating in an ocean of love, remembering the promise of my Lord. I could not control my mind and have left my place called Kāśī-dhāma (Vārāṇasī). I have decided to stay near the border of Māyāpur on the bank of the Gaṅgā. There I will stay in a cottage while engaging in *gaurāṅga-bhajana*.”

After hearing this from Mahādeva, Pārvatī immediately came to Sīmantadvīpa. She started to chant the holy name of Gaura with great love, meditating on Śrī Gaurāṅga. After a few days, Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu mercifully appeared in front of Pārvatī-devī along with all His associates. His body was tall and the color of molten gold. His head was covered with gently curling locks of hair and His limbs were



Śiva and Pārvatī

very attractive. He wore a *dhotī* folded thrice and a beautiful flower garland was draped around His neck. Due to great ecstasy Gaura Rāya started to speak with a chocked voice, "My dear Pārvatī! Please tell Me why you have come here?" Pārvatī fell at the feet of the Lord of the universe and informed Him about her pitiful situation. She said, "O Lord Jagannātha! Life of the whole universe! You are merciful to everyone except me. You have engaged me to keep all living entities who are averse to You in the bondage of material existence. I am engaged in that service and deprived of Your unlimited *premā*. People say, wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, *māyā* cannot stay. As a result I am always distant from You. O my Lord, how can I see Your pastimes? Unless You show me the path, I am hopeless."

Saying this, Pārvatī-devī took the dust from the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga and very eagerly placed it on her head in the sīmanta (the middle portion of the hair just above the forehead of ladies is known as sinthi or sīmanta).

Therefore this island is called Śrī Sīmantadvīpa, although some people out of ignorance call this place Simuliyā.

Being very pleased with Pārvatī-devī Lord Gaurāṅga said, "Dear Pārvatī! Please listen carefully. You are not different from Me. You are My energy. One energy serves Me accepting two forms. As My *svarūpa-śakti* you are known as Rādhikā. Rādhā has expanded in you as My external energy. Without you My pastimes will not be perfect. You are definitely working as *yoga-māyā* in My pastimes. In Vraja-dhāma you reside eternally as Paurṇamāsī. In Navadvīpa you remain as Prauḍhā Māyā along with Kṣetra-pāla Mahādeva." Saying this Lord Gaurāṅga disappeared. Pārvatī was filled with ecstatic love. She stayed in Sīmantadvīpa as Sīmantinī in one form and as Prauḍhā Māyā-devī in Māyāpur in another, for the pleasure of Lord Gaurāṅga.

The following is a description of Sīmantadvīpa in *Bhakti-ratnākara*.

One day in Kailāsa Lord Maheśvara was feeling impatient within his heart while chanting the nectarean names of the Lord's devotees. He was loudly calling the names of the different devotees of the Lord's various incarnations who would appear in Navadvīpa. Lord Śiva was chanting the glories of the devotees with his five mouths. His whole body was in ecstasy and he was experiencing bliss within his heart. He was dancing very wonderfully, naked and ecstatic, causing the entire Kailāsa mountain to shake. He was playing his musical

RIGHT / *Lord Gaurāṅga*

instruments, the sound of which was resounding through the whole universe, and roaring loudly like a madman. Upon seeing Lord Śaṅkara in this situation, goddess Pārvatī became very perturbed as she could not understand what was happening.

After some time Trilocana-deva (Śiva) became calm and quiet. From his eyes tears of bliss were flowing which he could not stop. He looked like a silver mountain sitting on a skin mat. He was praising the good fortune of the age of Kali. What a wonderful person Lord Maheśvara is! He was smiling and looking around, happy within his heart to see Pārvatī's attempt to understand the situation. He made her sit by his side and she asked, "Oh, my Lord! I have never seen the mercy you have shown today. I have never heard these names you have just pronounced from your lotus mouth before. You are praising the good fortune of Kali-yuga again and again. From this I can understand that all these great personalities will appear in Kali-yuga." By hearing the words of Pārvatī-devī with great satisfaction, Lord Mahādeva told her, "In this Kali-yuga Śrī Kṛṣṇa will appear in Nadia as the son of Śacī-devī. He will accept the bodily splendor of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. No one can make any comparison to that form. The whole world will become mad just by seeing His form once. By the beauty of His body, the pride of Kandarpa (Cupid) will be smashed. He will manifest many wonderful pastimes in Navadvīpa. He will relish the rarest *vraja-premā* with all the devotees of all His incarnations. He will manifest an ocean of bliss in the *saṅkīrtana* movement. By His own good qualities He will deliver the whole universe. During the time of this incarnation no one will remain distressed. Whatever desires anyone has will be fulfilled.

> Whatever offenses anyone has committed previously, the Lord will excuse, and thus please everyone. He will reveal the glories of the devotees elaborately. I must tell you there is no one who is more merciful than Him."

Who can describe with his one mouth what Pārvatī felt in her heart by hearing this?

Then Pārvatī-devī came to this place in Navadvīpa to worship Lord Śrī Gaurasundara. Lord Gaurasundara was very pleased to know that Pārvatī-devī was worshiping Him. He appeared in front of Pārvatī-devī, His bodily luster overwhelming the whole universe. His face was effulgent like millions of moons. Who can remain patient to see the two long eyes of the Lord? His dazzling cheeks defeated the pride of a mirror. His long arms extended down to His knees and His chest was broad and strong. His body was decorated with many varieties of jewellery and ornaments. His clothes defeated the pride of Madana or Cupid and the way He walked was full of happiness. When Pārvatī-devī saw the Lord, she could not control herself any longer as tears of bliss flowed from her eyes. Seeing Pārvatī in this condition Lord Viśvambhara came close to her with great happiness in His heart and spoke sweet words, "By your worship I could not control My heart. I promise that whatever desire you express to Me, I will definitely grant you." Hearing this from the Lord, Pārvatī was extremely happy. Her whole body was in incomparable ecstasy. She spoke to Prabhu Viśvambhara with folded hands, saying, "You will make this Kali-yuga most fortunate by manifesting Your pastimes. You will remove the threefold miseries of the whole universe very easily. You will increase the happiness of all the living entities. You are *antaryāmī*, incognito, and You know everything. You know very well how my heart always feels distress. I have committed many offenses against Your devotees. I cursed Citraketu and therefore he became the demon Vṛtrāsura. I cannot describe the good qualities of Your devotees. I committed an offense against him but still Your devotee Citraketu was glorifying me and praying to me. Please bless me so that all of those with whom You will have different pastimes in Nadia will be pleased with me. Oh, my Lord! I cannot fully express my heart's desire to always see Your pastimes in Nadia." The Lord replied, "All your desires will be fulfilled. None of My activities are performed without you." The Lord was about to disappear when Pārvatī-devī fell at His lotus feet and offered her obeisance. She then put the dust of the lotus feet of the Lord upon her "*sīmanta*".

Pārvatī-devī became very worried, seeing that the Lord had disappeared, and wondered when He would manifest His pastimes. Therefore this island is known as Sīmantadvīpa.

Īśāna Ṭhākura said: "Whoever sees this Sīmantadvīpa once will have achieved success in his life. He will very easily become free from the fear of material existence. People still worship Pārvatī-devī here and by her mercy they do not feel any suffering or experience any problems. In this Simuliyā village Lord Gaurāṅga had many pastimes with His unlimited numbers of associates. How can I explain with my one mouth the happiness manifested here during the time of the *nagara-saṅkīrtana*?"

(*Bhakti-ratnākara*)

SĪMANTINĪ-MANDIRA

Goddess Pārvatī is worshiped as Sīmantinī-devī. The exact location of Simuliyā village is not known, but the Vaiṣṇavas accept one place that they call Sīmantinī-mandira. When you walk from Belpukur along the dirt road which joins the Māyāpur road from Chowgacha to Hulor Ghat, you will come across a village called Sonaḍāṅgā. In this village there is a small Śiva temple. All *parikramā* parties stop here to discuss Sīmantinī-devī. Although this is believed to be the place of Sīmantinī, there is no temple or deity of her here.

CHAND KAZI'S SAMĀDHI

tat-samīpe mahā-devi
mathurā vidyate purī
abhavat yatra vai kaṁso
yavanasya gṛhe kalau

"O Mahādevī! Near that place (Sīmantadvīpa, where Pārvatī had *darśana* of Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu) is the city of Mathurā, where in the age of Kali, Kaṁsa took birth in a *yavana* family."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.34)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes: "North of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa is the town of Mathurā and the holy place known as Ṣaṣṭhi-tīrtha, which is within the exquisitely beautiful forest of Madhuvana (in Vraja). This is a very extensive area populated by many people. May my eyes become purified by viewing this scene."

(*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

The place of the Kazi is compared to the city of Mathurā. Here Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu delivered Chand Kazi by giving him the jewel of Kṛṣṇa. Kaṁsa, from the pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Mathurā, now appeared as Chand Kazi. Therefore Mahāprabhu, when He went to meet with Chand Kazi, addressed him as uncle or *māmā*. Being empowered by King Hussein Shah, Chand Kazi broke the *mṛdaṅga* at the beginning of the *saṅkīrtana* and thus created a lot of disturbance. Hussein Shah was Jarāsandha during the pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvāpara-yuga. Chand Kazi was his relative and thus had great power.

When Lord Gaurāṅga Mahaprabhu appeared in front of him in the form of Lord Narasiṁha, Chand Kazi was very frightened. He took shelter at the lotus feet of the most merciful Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, who gave the Kazi love of Godhead. Only the most fortunate people hear the pastime of Mahāprabhu and Chand Kazi and about his deliverance. Now you can see the *samādhi* of Chand Kazi who was also known as Campa. At his *samādhi* there are two trees, a neem tree and a *campaka* flower tree representing Nimāi and Campa (Chand Kazi).

CHAND KAZI'S SAMĀDHI

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: Daytime

DIRECTIONS: It is one kilometer north of the Yoga-pīṭha, and three and a half kilometers north of ISKCON. The *samādhi* is on the left side of the road, in the middle of the first village after the Yoga-pīṭha, called Bamanpukur bazaar (market). From the road you will see a small archway in-between some shops and a large tree in the background.

POINT OF INTEREST: The stone *samādhi* of Chand Kazi has two trees growing out of it. The *campaka* tree is said to represent Chand Kazi. It is over 500 years old and therefore witnessed the events of Chand Kazi's pastimes with the Lord. Even though the trunk of this tree is hollow, it is still in full bloom and gives *campaka* flowers all year round, even when it is not flowering season.

ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHA TEMPLE

This Jagannātha temple is situated in the Śaraḍāṅgā area and the deity here manifested five hundred years ago. At present Lord Jagannātha along with Lord Baladeva, Subhadrā-devī and Sudarśana is worshiped here under the management of ISKCON.

The appearance of these deities is described in the book The Pastimes and History of Lord Jagannātha in Rājāpur as follows:

At the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu, a devotee named Jagadīśa Ganguli lived in a small village near the present-day Māyāpur. Jagadīśa was a highly elevated Vaiṣṇava and even though he was very old, still every year he would make the 900 km journey on foot to Jagannātha Purī in the Bay of Bengal. He would travel with other devotees from Bengal to meet their most dear Lord Caitanya, have darśana of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva and Subhadrā-devī, and participate in the ecstatic Ratha-yātrā. After four months they would return to their homes in Bengal.

One day Jagadīśa's happiness was ruined. He was stricken with a serious disease that left him totally blind. When

he realized that he could no longer see the divine forms of Lord Caitanya and the Jagannātha deities, he became very depressed. Worse yet, his friends considered the annual pilgrimage to Purī too long and too dangerous for a blind man and they refused to take him along with them. Jagadīśa remained in Navadvīpa in constant lamentation and despondency. Out of hopelessness he even considered committing suicide.

Then one night Lord Jagannātha appeared to Jagadīśa in a dream. The next morning, the Lord told him, when Jagadīśa went for his daily bath in the Gaṅgā, a log would touch his head and restore his vision. The Lord told Jagadīśa that he should take that log and go to a nearby village where a devotee-carpenter lives. The Lord explained also that the carpenter would refuse the work because he was a leper and had deformed hands. Jagadīśa would have to insist, and convince the carpenter to do this work.

On completion of this job, the Lord assured, the carpenter's leprosy would immediately vanish.

Upon awakening, Jagadīśa was amazed at his dream. He immediately left for his morning bath in the Gaṅgā and became ecstatic when a log touched his head and restored his vision. He took the wood and went to a nearby village, where he searched and searched until he found a leper carpenter. Jagadīśa implored the leper to carve a deity of Lord Jagannātha from the wood, but the carpenter flatly refused. He showed Jagadīśa his deformed fingers and asked him, "How is it possible for me to carve the divine form of the Lord with these hands?" But Jagadīśa insisted. He explained to the leper that his leprosy would be cured once he finished the carving. Finally the leper agreed.

Jagadīśa stayed with the leper as he was working and saw him suffering terribly. Blood and pus oozed from the stumps that were once his fingers and he wanted to quit the work. But Jagadīśa encouraged him and enabled him to forget his agony long enough to finish the deity of Lord Jagannātha. The very moment he finished, his leprosy disappeared. Jagadīśa took the deity to a site near the present Jagannātha temple and established His worship there.

A few nights later, Jagadīśa had another dream. This time Lord Jagannātha instructed him to take some nearby neem wood to the same carpenter and have him make deities of Subhadrā and Balarāma. Jagadīśa did so and installed Them in the temple next to Lord Jagannātha.

Legend has it that after the demise of Jagadīśa Ganguli, the Lord, being dissatisfied with the neglectful state of His worship, decided to end His manifest pastimes. Suddenly there was an outbreak of cholera. The inhabitants of the surrounding area assembled at the temple and prayed to Prabhu Jagannātha to have pity on them and save their lives. That night, Jagannātha came to the head priest in a dream and said, "One of the housewives of the Ganguli family, who is characterless, dared to dishonor Me. For this offense everyone in the Ganguli family and the village will die if they do not leave the place." The next morning the villagers found the members of the Ganguli family dead and immediately deserted the entire area.

Since there was no more worship at the temple, Lord Jagannātha, Subhadrā, and Balarāma were forgotten, and save for the flat roof over Their heads, the temple fell down around Them and was soon covered by the surrounding jungle.

For reasons mysterious to most, the Lord appears and disappears according to His own sweet will. Indeed He states that one who understands the mystery of His appearance and activities does not take birth again in the material world.

Centuries after the demise of the Ganguli family, villagers noticed a uniquely beautiful blue flower growing on top of the snake-infested ruin that was once Lord Jagannātha's temple. When they went near the mound they heard a voice calling, "Please give Me water, I am thirsty! Please give Me water." But because the temple had no owner people were reluctant to go near it due to fear of poisonous snakes and other wild beasts. The deities remained neglected. It wasn't until about 1958 when the Lord, who once again desired to be worshiped, called for Jaimini Ghosh.

Jaimini Ghosh (from the nearby village of Bahadurpur) was only a young man at that time and he recalls:

"One evening on my way to Navadvīpa, I was passing along the road just outside the Jagannātha temple, when a bamboo tree crashed across the path. Feeling an uncanny presence, I suspected the work of some ghost and I knew that if I stepped over the tree, something would happen to me. Gripped by fear, I crouched to the ground and in that terrified condition I lost consciousness."

He awoke to an assuring voice saying, "It's alright now, you may proceed, there is no more danger."

Jaimini said, "Why did you do that to me?"

"I didn't," replied the voice. "I saved you, I am your friend."

Suspicious, Jaimini replied, "If you saved me, then help me get to my uncle's house in Navadvīpa."

As if he were being carried, young Jaimini effortlessly sped down the jungle path, along the main road, across the Ganges (without a boat) and arrived safely at his uncle's house.

Shortly after, the same voice spoke to him, revealing Himself to be Lord Jagannātha, and told Jaimini to begin His worship by offering Ganges water, milk, and *bātāsā* (sugar sweet). Jaimini called Phatik Chatterjee, who was the owner of the land on which the temple was situated, and told him everything. Phatik, with his son-in-law Ram and other villagers, cleared away the jungle and lifted Jagannātha from under a termite hill. Although the deities had been residing in the middle of a termite hill, Their wooden forms were miraculously intact, Their bodies having been packed in frankincense. Only some parts of the bodies of Baladeva and Subhadrā had to be repaired by a sculptor who used neem wood from a tree in Phatik Chatterjee's garden.

A small temple was constructed for Them (which still can be seen at the site next to the Śiva-liṅga and banyan tree) and Phatik Chatterjee became the *pūjārī* for Their Lordships. In 1979, the aging *pūjārī* felt he may not be able to go on for long with the worship of his beloved *mūrtis* and consequently donated the temple and property to ISKCON on Gaura-pūrṇimā day. By the kind contribution of various devotees a wonderful temple has been constructed, surrounded by nice gardens and mango groves.

These historical deity forms of Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā have been here at least 500 years.

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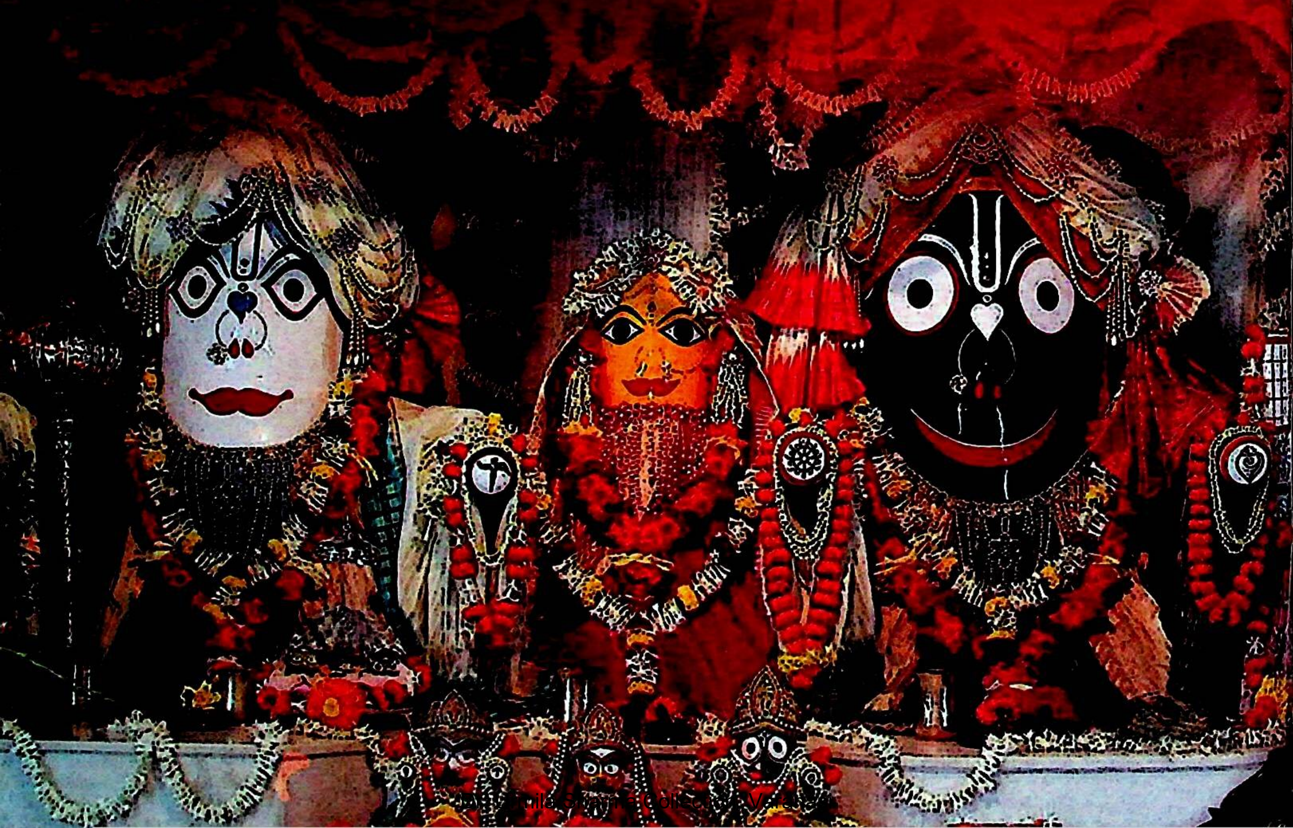
ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHA TEMPLE

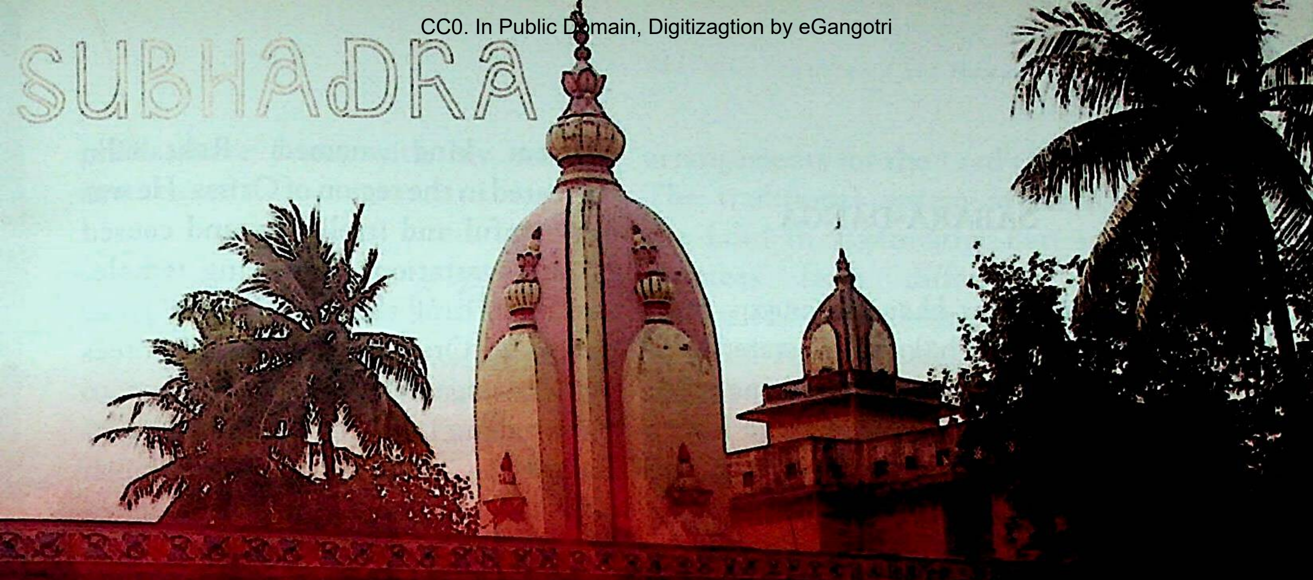
PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: 7.30 a.m. - 1 p.m. and 4-8 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Continue up Bhaktisiddhānta Road from Chand Kazi's *samādhi*. Around the first corner and up a short distance, you will see a signboard for the Jagannātha temple on the left side of the road. Take the road opposite this signboard and proceed until you see a beautiful lion gate on your right side (around 15 minutes walking). From ISKCON it is approximately four kilometers and takes about 40 minutes by rickshaw.

PRESIDING DEITIES: The beautiful Lord Jagannātha, Lord Balarāma, Lady Subhadrā and Sudarśana-cakra.





POINTS OF INTEREST:

Diorama display: This is on the left side between the main gate and the temple. It depicts the pastime of Lord Jagannātha's appearance in this deity form.

Old temple: The far right end of the property is where the original temple used to be.

Kalpa-vṛkṣa tree: Next to the old temple is a kalpa-vṛkṣa (wish-fulfilling) tree. The local people have worshiped Lord Śiva and Pārvatī here as long as can be remembered. It is said that Lord Śiva and Pārvatī came here to perform austerities and are still present. Many people have had their desires fulfilled by praying here and leaving a stone hanging on the tree. Vaiṣṇavas can pray to Lord Śiva and Pārvatī for kṛṣṇa-premā.

Śiva-liṅga: Lord Śiva is under this tree in the form of a large liṅga known as Kṣetra-pāla. One day, when ISKCON first took over the temple, the pūjārī was making an offering to Lord Jagannātha. He pushed aside this stone with his leg thinking it was an ordinary stone. Immediately after doing that he developed a heavy headache and began vomiting. He cycled back to ISKCON but was so sick and weak he collapsed and fell off the bike a number of times. At ISKCON he was advised to return, worship the liṅga, and beg forgiveness for this offense. He did that and was immediately cured.

It is quite cool in this area and one day in the summer of 1994, a pūjārī came here to get relief from the midday heat. While resting he had a dream in which he saw a male figure like Lord Śiva. This person asked the pūjārī for something to drink saying, "I am very dry and thirsty. You should at least give me some milk to drink." The pūjārī woke up and saw the the śilā was indeed very parched and dry. Since then the devotees offer this Śiva-liṅga milk, tilaka, and bael leaves every day.

ŚABARA-ḌĀṄGĀ

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has stated: "Further north is the enchanting place known as Śaraḍāṅgā. Here the leader of the Śabara race, out of fear of the demon named Raktabāhu, secretly resides along with a deity of the Lord of Nīlādri, Jagannātha. May I always behold this place with my very eyes."

At present this place is called Śaraḍāṅgā. Once the demon Raktabāhu attacked the Jagannātha temple in Purī. Jagannātha's devotees brought the Lord here and secretly stayed at this place.

His Grace Paṅkajāṅghri Prabhu has described this event in more detail in his book *The Pastimes and History of Lord Jagannātha in Rājāpur*:

Lord Jagannātha of Śrī Sīmantadvīpa is not different from the Master of Śrī Nīlācala-dhāma (Jagannātha Purī) Himself. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has re-established this truth with historical facts in his book *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, "The glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma." The following story is mentioned in that book:

Around the seventh century, one *yavana* king named Raktabāhu appeared in the region of Orissa. He was very sinful and irreligious and caused great devastation, destroying temples and terrorizing the hearts of the pious people of Orissa. When the devotees of Lord Jagannātha in Purī came to know about the mischievousness of Raktabāhu, they became very much afraid. They immediately approached Lord Jagannātha: "O worshipful Lord," the devotees prayed, "we are in great anxiety knowing that a miscreant named Raktabāhu is breaking down all temples and destroying the deities inside. He is now proceeding in this direction. He may come at any moment and attack Your temple. If that happens, then we will have to give up our lives, because we'll never be able to tolerate any action against You. Please, save us from this danger by making proper arrangements for the protection of Your divine form and the temple, O Almighty Lord!"

Being thus approached by His devotees, Lord Jagannātha appeared in the dream of the head priest that night and spoke to him as follows: "My dear pūjārī, I am completely overwhelmed by perceiving the ardent love and devotion that you devotees have for Me. You all love Me more than your own selves. This is the symptom of a pure devotee. Actually nobody can harm My divine form or My temple. I certainly need not worry about that. Just by My powerful will I can keep all miscreants away from the place where I stay with My beloved devotees.

> *But in order to bless My devotees and to reciprocate with them, many times I accept this kind of 'hardship' willingly. In this way My devotees' love and attachment for Me increases manifold. And since this is their desire, I establish their love for Me in a more prominent way.*

Tomorrow, therefore, please, remove the deities of Myself, Lord Balarāma, and Subhadrā-devī and set out for Bengal. You should take the path through the jungle so that you can easily escape Raktabāhu, who is coming by the main road. Have no fear, I will always protect you!"

The Lord then disappeared from the dream and the pūjārī woke up. He immediately broadcast the message, which stirred the devotees, and they all started to make the proper arrangements for the Lord's journey.

The traditional system of service to the Lord in Jagannātha Purī is that devotees from different sections of society are assigned to various services. For instance, brāhmaṇas are responsible for worship of the deities. Other devotees cook for the Lord's pleasure. Those devotees known as the Śabaras perform the service of carrying Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā-devī when Their Lordships attend certain festivals like snāna-yātrā, etc.

When the message reached the Śabaras that the Lord wanted to leave for Bengal, they immediately made all necessary arrangements for departure the next morning. They walked all day and just before dusk set in, they settled in a suitable place. There they collected fruits, flowers and leaves from the jungle and worshiped Their Lordships. Finally they put Them to rest, and after honoring the Lord's mahā-prasāda they themselves took rest. The next morning, after the deities had been worshiped, the Śabaras again started for their destination. In this way they spent eleven days, and on the twelfth they arrived in Sīmantadvīpa, one of the nine islands of Navadvīpa-dhāma.

That night, Lord Jagannātha appeared in the dream of the head Śabara and expressed His desire to settle in this very place, which was transcendental in all respects. At once, the Śabara devotees made all efforts for the proper arrangements to fulfill the Lord's desire to stay there permanently. The Śabara Vaiṣṇavas went on serving the Lord for generations to come. Due to their pure love and devotion they all attained liberation and finally went back to Godhead, to Lord Jagannātha's eternal abode in the spiritual sky. Till today the Śabaras' village is located near the Jagannātha temple and is known as Śabara-ḍāṅgā, "the place of the Śabaras." Gradually, by the influence of time, the deities and the temple disappeared from sight. The Lord, however, never left that place.

MAYAMĀRĪ

mayamārīṁ tatottīrya
dṛṣṭvā rāma-parākramam

"(After visiting Śrīdhara's house) Śrī Gaurahari crossed the place known as Mayamārī, having witnessed the valor of Balarāma."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.37)

In Sīmantadvīpa towards the south-west of the Jagannātha temple on the bank of the Jalāṅgī river there is a place called Mayamārī. There is a nice historical account about this place.

Once, Lord Baladeva went on tīrtha-yātrā. During the course of His pilgrimage He reached Navadvīpa and stopped to take some rest. While Lord Balarāma was there the local people approached Him and informed Him about a demon called Mayāsura who was troubling the people very much. Hearing of the pitiful situation of the local people, Lord Balarāma, out of mercy for them, rushed towards the demon Mayāsura and had a great fight with him in the middle of a field. Finally the demon was killed by Lord Balarāma and therefore this place has been known as Mayamārī since then. Mārī means killing. This place is non-different from Tālavana in Vraja-maṇḍala.

DIRECTIONS: This is in the area of the fields on the front right side of Śrīdhara's place near the Sarasvatī River. There is nothing specific to mark this place.

BELPUKUR

bilva-pakṣaṁ tato gatvā
viprān kṛṣṇa-parāyaṇān
premṇā samplāvayām āsa
kāñcī-puraṁ jagat-patiḥ

"Jagat-pati Śrī Gaurasundara went to Bilva-pakṣa and flooded all brāhmaṇas devoted to Kṛṣṇa and Kāñcīpuram with kṛṣṇa-premā."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 55)

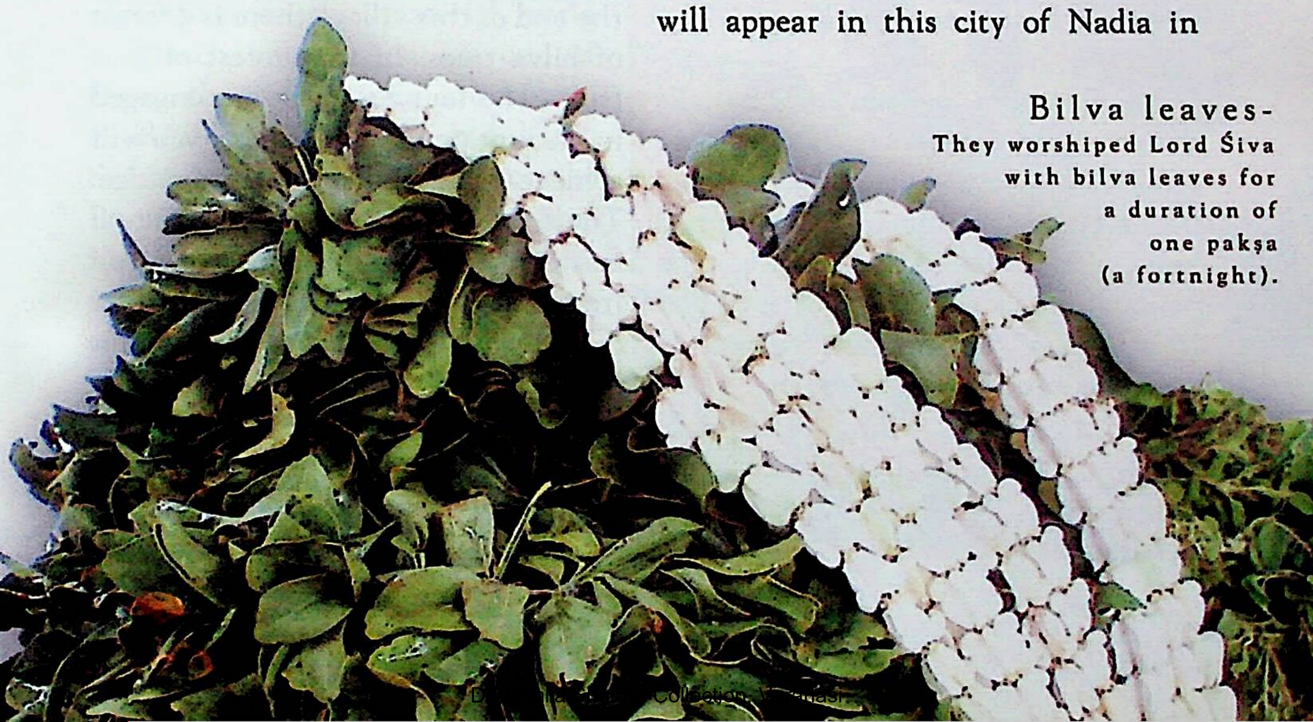
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states in Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṇga:
"In the distance I will see the forest of

bilva trees (Bilvavana of Vraja) where the four Kumāra brothers remain steeped in meditation on Lord Gaura. And further in the distance I will see the land known as Saṅkarṣaṇa-kṣetra where Nityānanda Prabhu performs His pastimes. This area is manifest to the learned devotees."

Why is this place named Belpukur or Bilva-pakṣa?

Īśāna Ṭhākura has told the story as follows:

Belpukur has been addressed as Belpoukhera (Belpoukhariyā) in Bhakti-ratnākara by Īśāna Ṭhākura. Īśāna Ṭhākura said to Śrīnivāsa, "This village which is now known as Belpoukhera (Belpoukhariyā) was previously known as Bilva-pakṣa. Now I will explain to you why this place has been named Bilva-pakṣa. Lord Śiva was residing here. Who can describe his glories? The most merciful Pañca-vaktra Mahādeva (five-headed Śiva) would fulfil the desire of anyone who asked him anything in the service of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Once upon a time some ascetic brāhmaṇas were worshiping Lord Śiva to fulfil their desires. They worshiped Lord Śiva with bilva leaves for a duration of one pakṣa (a fortnight). Lord Śiva became very pleased with them. He looked upon them with a very merciful glance and spoke, 'You may ask anything that you desire.' The brāhmaṇas said, 'Please give us that which you consider to be the greatest.' Lord Śiva said, 'Surprisingly there is nothing greater than service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.' The brāhmaṇas said, 'O, merciful Lord! If service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the greatest thing, then kindly tell us how we can achieve it.' Pañca-vaktra Śiva said, 'Do not worry. You will very easily get the chance to serve Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Within a few days the Lord will appear in this city of Nadia in



Bilva leaves-
They worshiped Lord Śiva
with bilva leaves for
a duration of
one pakṣa
(a fortnight).

the house of a brāhmaṇa. All of you will also take birth here at the same time and give Him great pleasure in His childhood mood. All of you will study under His guidance as His students and thus understand Him as pūrṇa-brahma (Complete Brahman) and sanātana-bhagavān (the eternal Supreme Person).

All of you, by the association of His devotees, will always be engaged in His service with great happiness.'

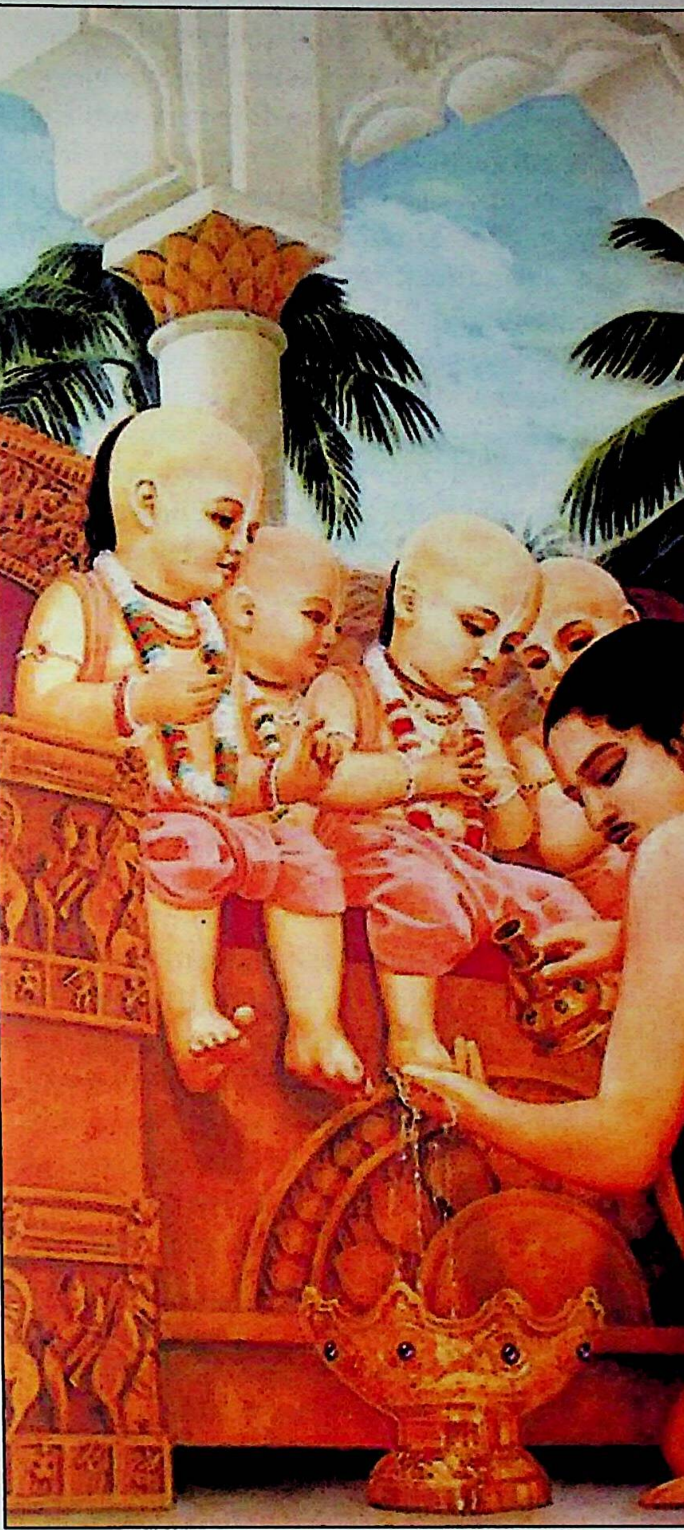
By hearing this from Lord Mahādeva all the brāhmaṇas offered prostrated obeisances to him and before leaving they recited many prayers. Then they all went to a solitary place to meditate upon the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

Īśāna Ṭhākura continued, "By the desire of Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa, Lord Śiva remained hidden there for some time. Because the brāhmaṇas worshiped him with bilva leaves during one pakṣa (fortnight), this place is called "Bilva-pakṣa" by learned people. If someone takes darśana of this place Lord Mahādeva will, with great pleasure, arrange for him to meet with Gauracandra which is a very rare blessing."

NIMBĀDITYA (NIMBĀRKA) BLESSED BY THE FOUR KUMĀRAS

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa describes:

After crossing the river Gaṅgā Lord Nityānanda proceeded for some distance and said to the devotees, "This most beautiful place is Bilva-pakṣa. Everyone calls this place Belpukur. This Belpukur is non-different from Bilvavana of Vraja-dhāma. Five-headed Bilvakeśa Mahādeva was residing here and the local brāhmaṇas pleased him by worshiping him with bael leaves for a period of two weeks. Mahādeva blessed all those brāhmaṇas to receive kṛṣṇa-bhakti. One of them was called Nimbāditya and he worshiped Lord Śiva very sincerely. Mahādeva mercifully told him, "At the end of this village there is a forest of bilva trees. In that forest of bael fruits, the four Kumāras are engaged in meditation. By their mercy you will achieve transcendental knowledge. The four Kumāras are your spiritual masters. You will receive all wealth from them." Saying this Mahādeva disappeared. Nimbāditya searched for the place as directed by Lord Śiva and found in that bilva forest a beautiful platform upon which the four Kumāras were sitting. (The four Kumāras are four ṛṣis called Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra.) They were naked and looked very sober in their meditation. Upon seeing them, Nimbāditya started chanting in great happiness, "Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa." By hearing the holy name of Lord Hari, the meditation of the four Kumāras broke. All of them were very happy to see a Vaiṣṇava in front of them. Each of the four Kumāras embraced Nimbāditya one after the other. They asked him, "Who are you? Why have you come here? Please tell us, we will fulfil your desires." Hearing this from the four Kumāras Nimbārka offered them prostrated daṇḍavat-praṇāma and introduced himself. Hearing of his identity, Śrī Sanat-kumāra spoke with a sweet smile on his face, "Knowing very well about the severe Kali-yuga, the most merciful Lord wants to spread bhakti-yoga among the people. The Lord empowered four persons and sent them to this material world to preach bhakti. You are one of them, the other three are known as Rāmānuja, Madhva and Viṣṇu Svāmī. Śrī Lakṣmī-devī has accepted Rāmānuja, Brahmā has accepted Madhvācārya and Rudradeva has accepted Viṣṇu Svāmī as the ācāryas of their respective sampradāyas. Today we have come to know you as our own representative and we wish to accept you as our disciple. Previously we were committed to the non-dual advaita concept of



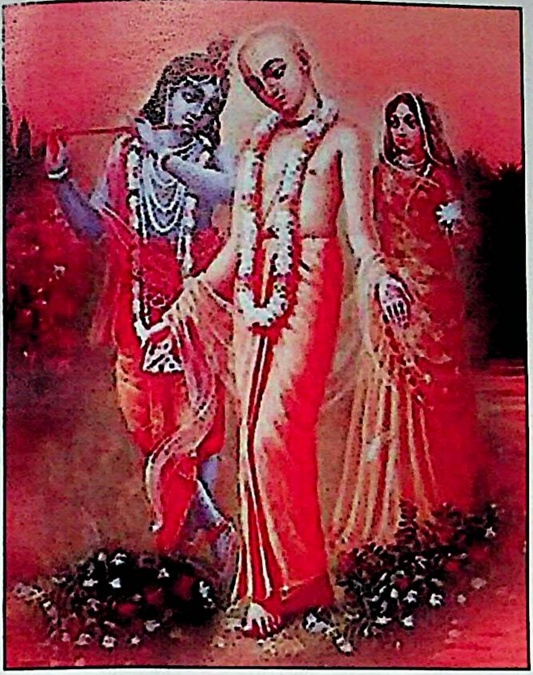
The four Kumāras

the Absolute Truth but by the mercy of the Lord we are now free from that sin. Now, understanding very well that pure devotion is the best, we have composed a saṁhitā named the Sanat-kumāra-saṁhitā. You will get initiation according to this Sanat-kumāra-saṁhitā." By seeing the causeless mercy of his guru, Nimbārka immediately went to the Gaṅgā to take bath. Upon his return, he fell at the lotus feet of the four Kumāras and said with great humility, "O, deliverers of fallen souls! Please deliver this most fallen soul." The Kumāra brothers offered him the yugala-mantra and taught him how to perform bhajana in bhāva-mārga.

NIMBĀRKA BLESSED BY ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA MAHAPRABHU

After receiving the mantra from the four Kumāras, Nimbārka started worshiping at Siddha-pīṭha-sthāna according to the processes given by the saṁhitā. Out of mercy upon Nimbārka Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa appeared there. By the effulgence of Their beautiful forms all directions became lit. With a smile the Lord said, "Nimbāditya! You are very fortunate to perform sādhana here. This Navadvīpa-dhāma is very dear to both of Us. Here We both appear in Our combined form as the son of Śacī." While saying this, Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa manifested Their combined form of Gaurāṅga to Nimbāditya. By seeing that most beautiful form of Lord Gaurāṅga, Nimbāditya became enchanted and said, "I have never seen or heard about such a wonderful form. Where does this wonderful form reside?" Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu said, "Do not reveal this form to the people now, preach kṛṣṇa-bhakti to develop more faith in the worship of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. I enjoy more when Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are worshiped. When I have My manifested pastime as Gaurāṅga we will enjoy the pastimes of learning. At that time you will take birth in the state of Kashmir and travel all over India as a Digvijayī. You will be a well-known scholarly person, Keśava Kāśmīrī. While traveling all over India you will reach Navadvīpa-dhāma and stay at Māyāpur village. Very learned teachers of Navadvīpa will run away just by hearing your name. At that time I will be engaged in vidyā-vilāsa (the pastime of learning).

I will defeat all of you and thus derive great pleasure. By the mercy of Sarasvatī you will understand the truth about Me and take shelter of Me by giving up all pride.



While saying this, Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa manifested Their combined form of Gaurāṅga to Nimbāditya

When this happens I will give you bhakti and send you to preach this highest knowledge. For the time being you can please Me by preaching the dvaitādvaita philosophy and keeping this confidential information about Me hidden. When I inaugurate the saṅkīrtana movement I will personally preach the essence of all your philosophy."

Mahāprabhu continued, "I will accept two tattvas (concepts) from each of the four Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas. From the Mādhva-sampradāya I will take the philosophy of refuting advaita-vāda and the worship of the deity of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, with the understanding that the deity form is eternal and transcendental. From the Rāmānuja-sampradāya I will accept ananya-bhakti and service to devotees. From the Viṣṇu Svāmī-sampradāya I will accept tadīya-sarvasva-bhāva (the consciousness that the Lord is everything to His devotee) and rāga-mārga-bhakti (worship of the Lord imbued with transcendental feelings). From the Nimbārka-sampradāya I will accept taking the exclusive shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the concept of gopī-bhāva." Saying this Śrī Gauracandra disappeared. Nimbāditya started crying profusely with great jubilation and love. He offered his obeisance to his spiritual master and then left to continue his pilgrimage.

MADANA GOPĀLA TEMPLE

There is a temple with a deity of Śrī Madana Gopāla in Belpukur. In the book Sri Navadvipa Dhama and Jagannatha Puri – A Practical Guide, it has been mentioned that this deity of Śrī Madana Gopāla was established and worshiped by Nīlāmbara Cakravartī Ṭhākura, the father of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī. Nīlāmbara Cakravartī is said to have moved from Śrīhaṭṭa (Sylhet) to this village sometime between 1475 and 1490. He came here with his wife and his daughter, Śacī-devī. This village used to be right next to the Gaṅgā, but is now about 6 km away.

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MADANA GOPĀLA TEMPLE

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARSANA TIMES: 6a.m.-12 p.m. and 4-7 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Proceed down Bhaktisiddhānta Road until you come to the main road to Calcutta. Instead of turning right in the direction of Krishnanagar and Calcutta, go straight ahead. Take the left turning at the corner of Dhubuliā Baṭalā where there is a large banyan tree. Then turn left next to a small market place and proceed for approximately one kilometer. On the left you will see the Belpukur Library, a white building in an open field. Behind this, to the left, is the Madana Gopāla temple. This is the area of Belpukur.

PRESIDING DEITY: This delightful deity of Madana Gopāla was worshiped by Nīlāmbara Cakravarti Thākura, the father of Śacī-mātā.

RĀMA-TĪRTHA (RUKUMPUR)

At this place Lord Balarāma killed the demon Kolāsura. Then, along with the members of the Yadu dynasty, He took bath in the Gaṅgā.

While Lord Balarāma was visiting different holy places He came to this place. At that time a demon by the name of Kolāsura was living here.

This powerful demon had mystic powers which he was using to keep the local people under his control.

The people approached Lord Balarāma for help and the Lord, being merciful upon them, came to fight with Kolāsura.

Kolāsura attacked Balarāma by surrounding Him with thousands of elephants and chariots from all sides. But Lord Balarāma very easily defeated all of Kolāsura's soldiers and finally killed the demon himself. If anyone takes bath at this tīrtha on the full-moon day in the month of Kārtika, he will achieve one hundred times the benefit of bathing in Haridvāra.

Now this place is known as Rukmapura (or Rukumpur). Lord Rāmacandra also visited this place during Tretā-yuga and Lord Nityānanda, after His marriage, stayed for some period at Rukumpur.

MEGHERA CHARA

This place is between Belpukur and Sonaḍāṅgā villages. Once, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu along with His devotees was passing through this place on nagara-saṅkīrtana. Suddenly a very dark cloud appeared in the sky. The devotees were worried that there would be heavy rain which would disrupt their saṅkīrtana but Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu waved His cloth asking the clouds to disappear and they immediately dispersed on the order of the Lord.

DIRECTIONS: Turn right after you enter the courtyard for Sīmantinī-devī temple and take the first road on the left. Going ahead, at the end of the village, you will see some fields. This is the area called Sonaḍāṅgā. You can continue down this road to go to Belpukur.

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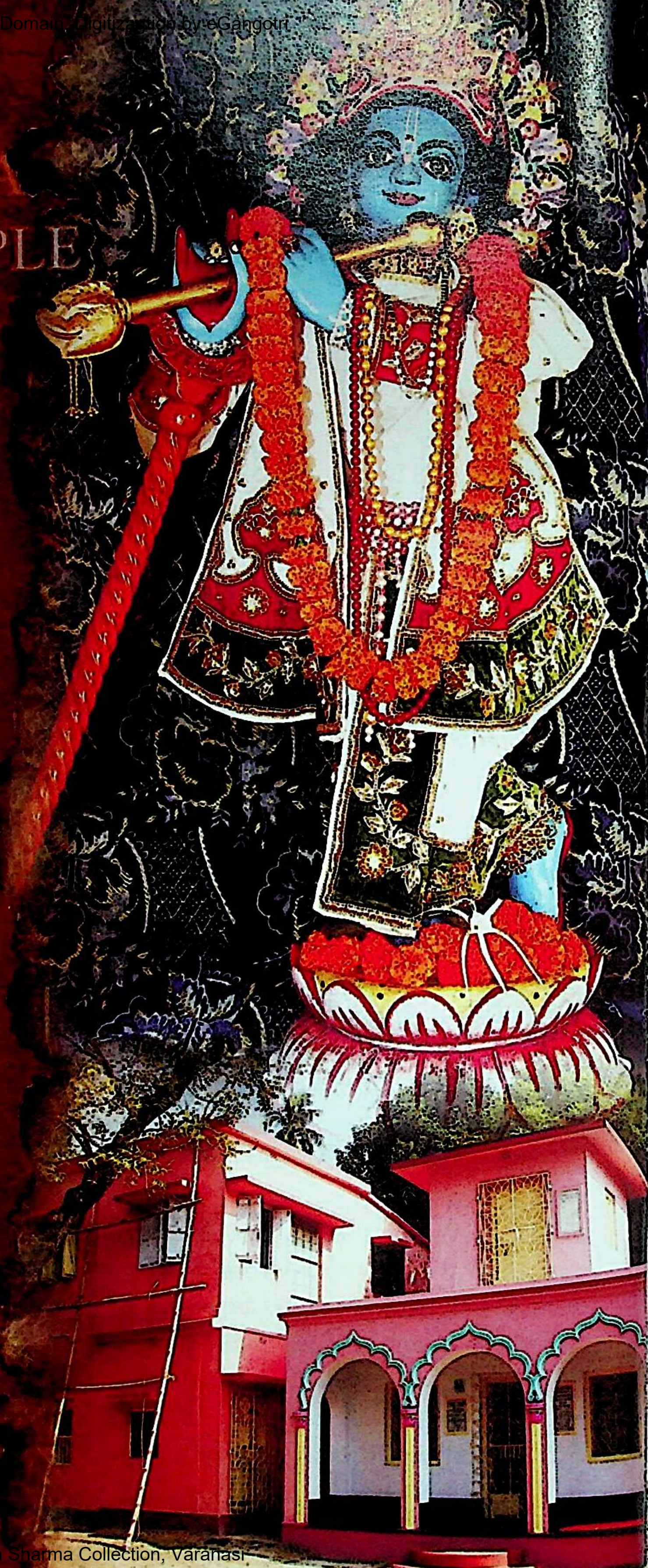
MADANA GOPĀLA TEMPLE

Practical Guide



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Śrī Godrumadvīpa

This island represents ***kīrtanam***-chanting.

Places to visit on this island are Surabhi-kuñja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's house, Suvarṇa-vihāra, Āmra-ghāṭa, Śrī Narasiṁha Pallī, Harihara-kṣetra, the River Alakanandā and Gaura-daha.

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Śrī Godrumadvīpa as follows:

"To the west of Narasiṁha Pallī flows the Gaṇḍakī River, which is beyond the Alakanandā River and Kāśī-kṣetra. I shall then see Godruma-kṣetra, corresponding to the place in Vraja where King Indra's Surabhi cow worshiped Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Within the entire three worlds there is no place comparable to Godruma. It is the forest in which the great sage Mārkaṇḍeya received the mercy of Lord Gaura. Just as Īśodyāna and Rādhā-kuṇḍa lie close to the bank of the River Gaṅgā, similarly Godruma lies just as close to the bank of the River Sarasvatī.

O my dear mind! Just worship, just worship the forest of Godruma! By this you will very soon behold the transcendental treasure of Lord Gaura's pastimes. Seeing the vision of these pastimes, you will easily attain the eternally sportive play of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Only this will fulfil all your desires.

Godruma corresponds to the city of Nanda Mahārāja in Vraja known as Śrī Nandīśvara, which is the residence of the cowherd folk. Here Śrī Gaurāṅga performs various pastimes. After having a snack of milk products at a cowherd's house in the afternoon, Nimāi goes to tend the cows in the pasturelands accompanied by His *gopa* friends.

The cowherd boys would say, 'O brother, You are a *gopāla*! Dressing like a *brāhmaṇa* boy does not suit You at all! Come, I'll carry You on my shoulders and we'll go herd the cows. Let's head toward Your mother's house in Māyāpur.'

... godruma-dvīpam āsādya
surabhi-sevitaṁ hariḥ
nanarta paramāviṣṭo
mṛkaṇḍa-suta-sannidhau

"THE LORD REACHED GODRUMADVĪPA, WHICH IS WORSHIPED BY SURABHI, AND THERE HE DANCED IN FRONT OF MĀRKAṆḌEYA ṚṢI IN GREAT ECSTASY."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 39)

One gopa would show great affection and give Him curds mixed with condensed milk, and another gopa would become agitated with love just by seeing the wonderfully beautiful form of the Lord. Yet another gopa would place fruits and flowers in His hand saying, 'O brother! Please come to my house every day!'

'You are the worshipable deity for the *brāhmaṇas*, but You are also the very purpose of life for us *gopas*. We cannot possibly forsake You – You are the only object of our meditation and consciousness. Just see the cows! On sighting You, they begin mooing and give up eating grass, even forgetting about their own calves!'

'Since it is now getting late, you should go home to your father's house and tomorrow we'll meet again at this place. I'll save some yoghurt, curds and condensed milk for you, but if you come late, I'll be very upset!'

In this way, Śrī Gaura and Nitāi play with the cowherd boys from day to day in the divine Godruma forest. If there is enough time, Gaura Bhagavān again bathes in the River Gaṅgā before proceeding home to Śrī Śacī.

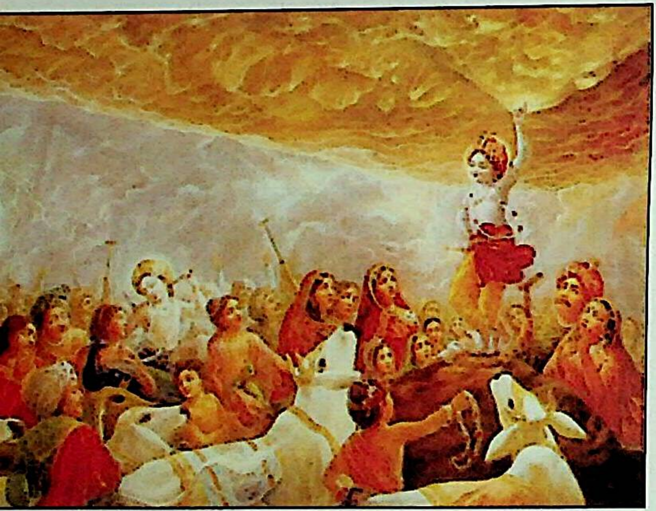
Will such a day ever be mine? When will I see the pure love-laden Godruma pastimes performed by the Lord in the mood of a cowherd boy playing with His cowherd friends? With a mind fixed in the longing to serve the Lord, I will reside at my house in Godruma."

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

WHY IS THIS ISLAND CALLED GODRUMADVĪPA?

Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya (*Parikramā-khaṇḍa*) describes:

Lord Nityānanda along with Śrī Jīva and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura reached the village called Gādigāchā. He explained, "This island is known as Godrumadvīpa. The Surabhi cow is always residing here. During Dvāpara-yuga Indra, bewildered by the illusory energy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, sent heavy rain to Vraja due to his great pride.



Lord Kṛṣṇa protected the *vraja-vāsīs* by holding the Govardhana mountain aloft.

Thus Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa destroyed the pride of Indra, the husband of Śacī. Indra realized that he had committed a great offense at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and fell at His lotus feet begging for forgiveness. The most merciful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, excused Indra for his offense. But Indra was nevertheless very frightened. He went to the Surabhi cow and told her, 'I could not understand the Lord in His *kṛṣṇa-līlā* and thus committed a severe offense at His lotus feet. I have heard that in the age of Kali Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa will manifest wonderful pastimes in Nadia. I fear that I may again become bewildered and offend the lotus feet of Śrī Hari. You know everything, my dear Surabhi-mātā. Kindly tell me what I should do to become free from this offensive nature.'

The Surabhi cow replied, 'Let us go to Navadvīpa-dhāma. There we will worship Nimāi.' Indra and Surabhi then came here and engaged in the worship of Lord Gaurāṅga which is very easy and gives great benefit. If someone cries, chanting the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga, he will obtain *darśana* of the Lord. After Indra and Surabhi performed their *bhajana* here Lord Gaurāṅga manifested Himself exhibiting His most beautiful form, smiling sweetly. His transcendental form was very gracious and He was the personification of the ecstatic storehouse of all mellows. Lord Gaurāṅga smilingly said, 'I know your desire. Very soon I will manifest My pastimes in Nadia. During this pastime you will serve Me here, so that you will not get caught by the net of *māyā* any more.' Saying this

Lord Gaurāṅga disappeared. Surabhi-devī stays there eternally under the banyan tree and constantly serves the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. Because mother Surabhi is staying here on this island under a banyan tree, it is known as Godrumadvīpa. Go means cow and *druma* means tree. All the desires of the devotees are fulfilled here. If anyone worships Lord Gaurāṅga residing here in a hut, he will attain His lotus feet.

THE STORY OF MĀRKAṆḌEYA ṚṢI

The *Purāṇas* also describe a very nice pastime of Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi on this island. The son of Mṛkaṇḍa Ṛṣi is known as Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi. He was blessed by Lord Śiva to live for seven *kalpas*. At the time of annihilation the whole earth was filled with the waters of devastation and therefore Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi could not find any shelter.

> *He was floating around and lamenting, "Why did I get such a boon of long life? Because of this I now have to go through all this trouble."*

While he was floating around he saw this land of Navadvīpa. These sixteen *krośas* of Navadvīpa were not flooded even during that time and were giving shelter to all devotees. Due to being tossed around by the waves Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi became senseless. Seeing him in this condition Surabhi lifted him with great care. When Mārkaṇḍeya Muni regained his external senses he saw the wonderful form of Godrumadvīpa. He saw this island extending for hundreds of millions of *krośas* and its surface was decorated with many rivers and reservoirs. He saw a banyan tree that extended for one *yojana* (eight miles), which was where the Surabhi cow was residing. By that time the *ṛṣi* was feeling very hungry. He told Surabhi, "O, Bhagavatī, kindly give me some milk and thus save my life." At that time the Surabhi cow, being very kind, fed Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi with her milk. The *muni* began to regain some strength and said to Surabhi, "O, Bhagavatī! You are my mother, the whole universe is bewildered by your *māyā*. Without proper understanding, I accepted this boon of a long life of seven *kalpas*. But now at the time of annihilation I am suffering terribly. My dear mother! Please tell me what I should do now. How can I become free from this suffering?"

The Surabhi cow replied, "Please worship the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. This Navadvīpa is beyond the material nature. This abode is never destroyed.

To our naked eye in worldly vision the size of this place is sixteen *krośas*. But in reality this abode is beyond the restriction of time and place. This land is Vaikuṇṭha and always free from any faults. Material illusory energy has no influence here. Just behold this most beautiful Navadvīpa-dhāma which is surrounded by the river Virajā. The size of each island is *śata-koṭi krośas*, one thousand million *krośas*. There are eight islands forming the shape of an eight-petalled lotus. Antardvīpa is situated in the center as the whorl of the lotus. All holy places, all demigods and *ṛṣis* are staying here and are engaged in worshiping Gaurāṅga. You, Mārkaṇḍeya, should take shelter of the wealth of the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga here. You should follow *dharma* without any duplicity, giving up desires for *bhukti* and *mukti*. By taking shelter of the worship of Lord Gaurāṅga you will very soon achieve *mādhurya-prema* (conjugal love). When that love arises within the heart it will make you float in the mellows of *vilāsa-kalā*. You will receive shelter at the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in Vraja-dhāma and your mind will always be fixed in the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. You should know that the pleasure of that service is incomparable." Hearing all this from Surabhi, Mārkaṇḍeya Muni spoke with folded hands, "When I see the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga what will happen to my destiny (*karma-phala*)?" Surabhi replied, "As soon as you utter the holy name of Gaurāṅga, all your *karma* will be destroyed. You will experience no more distress. You will be free from the cycle of birth and death. Not only will you be free from the result of your *karma*, you will also be free from the result of *jñāna*. You will be engaged in relishing *gaura-rasa* and worshiping Him sitting here on this island."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

SURABHI-KUÑJA

The place where Surabhi and Indra were performing *gaura-bhajana* is known as Surabhi-kuñja. Presently there is a Gauḍīya Maṭha temple at Surabhi-kuñja and the deities are worshiped in a small house. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also stayed at this place for a few years. This temple is located on the bank of the Jalāṅgī River. If you go from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja towards the boat ghat, this temple will be on your right about two hundred meters from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's place.

This place is non-different from Surabhivana in Vṛndāvana. It fulfils the desires of devotees and one who builds a cottage and worships here, will easily become absorbed in meditation on Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's lotus feet.

SURABHI-KUÑJA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: 9 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. and 4-8 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Go to Hulor Ghat by walking fifteen minutes down Bhaktisiddhānta Road, or by rickshaw from the ISKCON main gate. Take a boat across the Sarasvatī River (Jalāṅgī River). After getting off the boat, walk down the path until you reach the road. Rickshaw drivers will be there, or you can walk by turning left and proceeding down the road for approximately fifteen minutes. Soon after you make a sharp left turn on this road, you will see a signboard high up on a building on the left side saying, "Surabhi-kuñja Gauḍīya Maṭha."

PRESIDING DEITIES: Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are being worshiped here.

SVĀNANDA-SUKHADA-KUÑJA (ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA'S HOUSE)

This is the *bhajana-kuṭīra* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. While living here Śrīla Bhaktivinoda wrote the *Navadvīpa-dhāma- māhātmya*, which describes the glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma. He also discovered Lord Caitanya's appearance place during this time. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *samādhi* and Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī's *bhajana-kuṭīra* are also here.

Upstairs in the main house is the bedroom of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. There is a temple next to the original house where Gaura-Gadādhara, the original deities worshiped by Bhaktivinoda, are located.

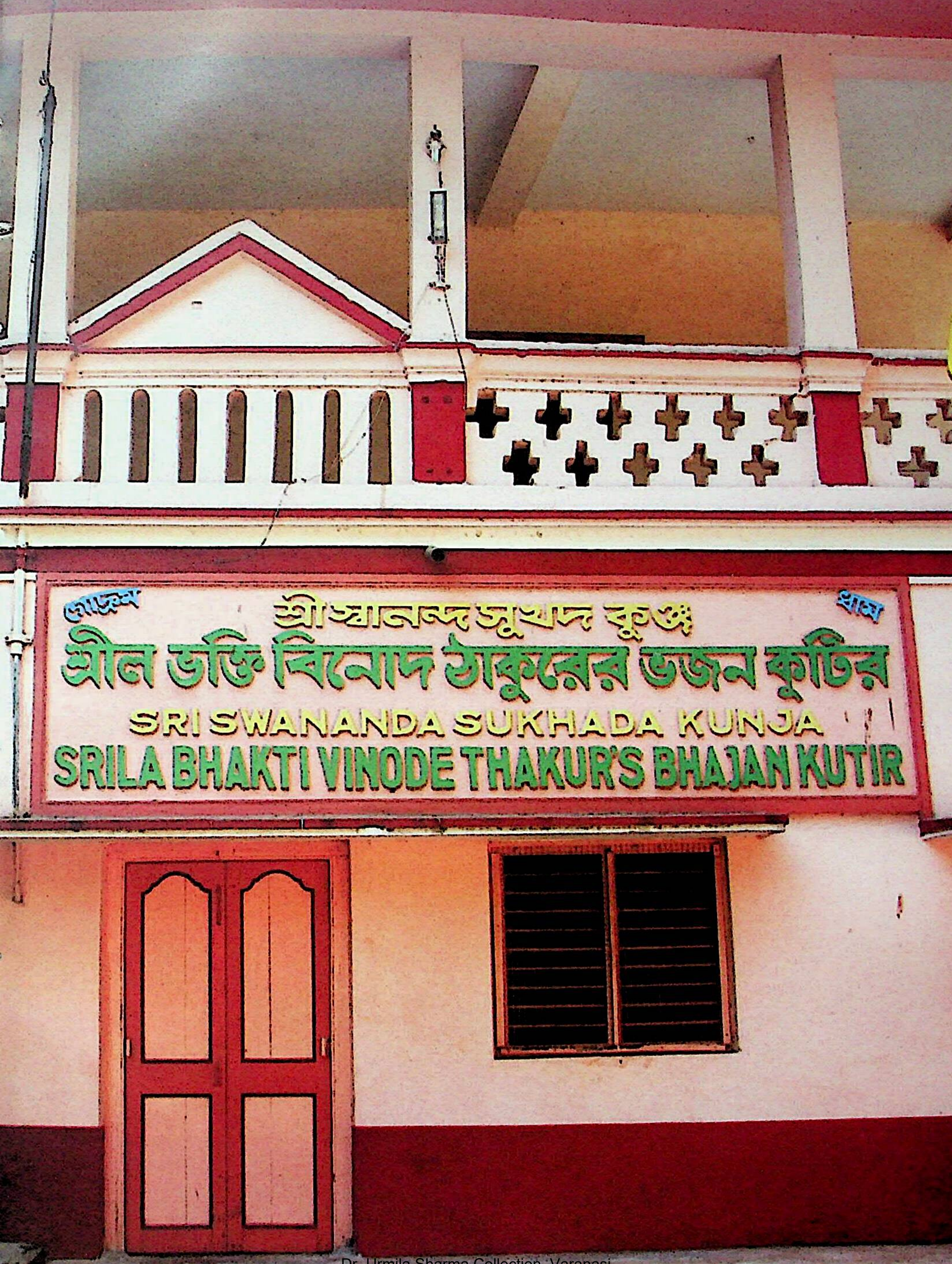
Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura predicted that a great devotee would appear and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Shortly thereafter, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda fulfilled his prediction. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura also had a vision that one day there would be a great spiritual city in Navadvīpa-dhāma. At present a city is being established in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named his house Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja. It is non-different from Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, the private grove of Lalitā *sakhī*, located on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Vṛndāvana. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's songs reveal how he is eternally living in this *kuñja* serving the divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. "My small cottage is shining beautifully within that most enchanting garden called Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja. Living there I will sing Lord Kṛṣṇa's holy name and greedily hanker for the time when I will be granted the opportunity to serve Him and His associates." (*Gīta-mālā*)

"On the banks of the celestial Gaṅgā, I will dwell in a cottage at Surabhi-kuñja in Godruma-dhāma. This land of Godruma is very conducive for performing devotional worship of the Supreme Lord and is non-different from the sacred place called Nandagrāma, located in the holy district of Mathurā." (*Śaraṇāgati*)

It is said that at times the four *ācāryas*, Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, would meet here and discuss the pastimes of Gaurahari.

There is a small house in one corner of the temple courtyard where Śrīla Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja used stay when he came to visit Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.


গোদ্রুম
শ্রীস্বানন্দসুখদ কুঞ্জ
গ্রাম
শ্রীল ভক্তি বিনোদ ঠাকুরের ভজন কুটির
SRI SWANANDA SUKHADA KUNJA
SRILA BHAKTI VINODE THAKUR'S BHAJAN KUTIR

SVĀNANDA-SUKHADA-KUÑJA

(ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA'S HOUSE)

PRACTICAL GUIDE

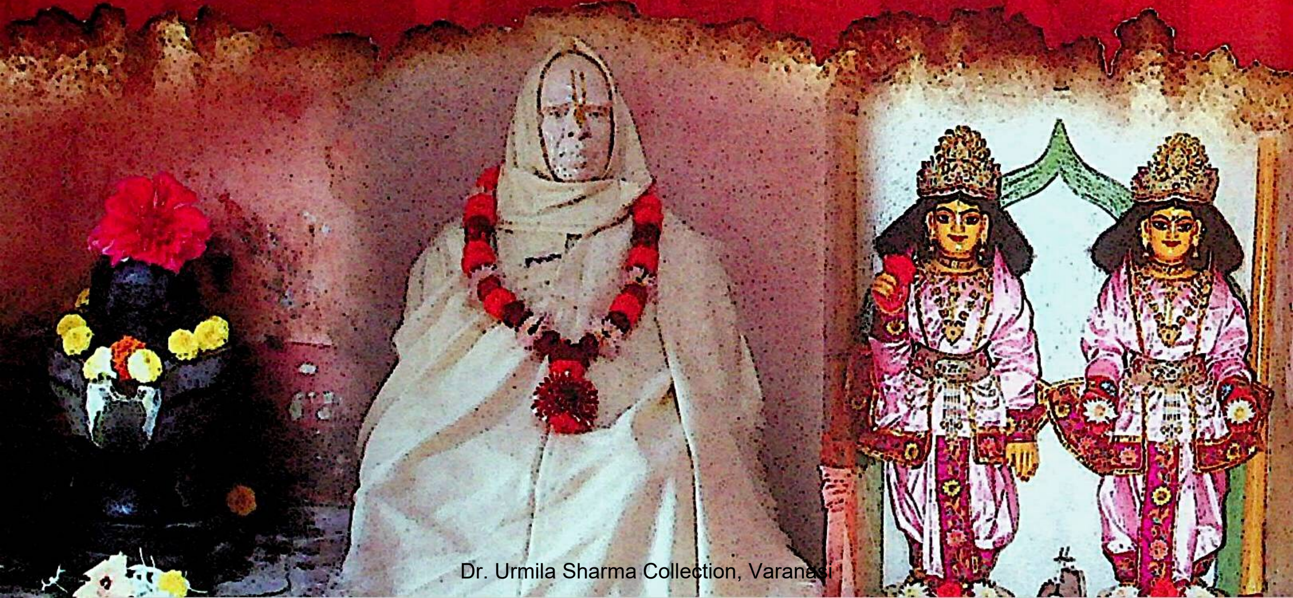
DARŚANA TIMES: 6-11.30 a.m. and 3-8 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Continue a short distance down the main road from Surabhi-kuñja. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's house will be on your right just past a big banyan tree on the left.

PRESIDING DEITIES:

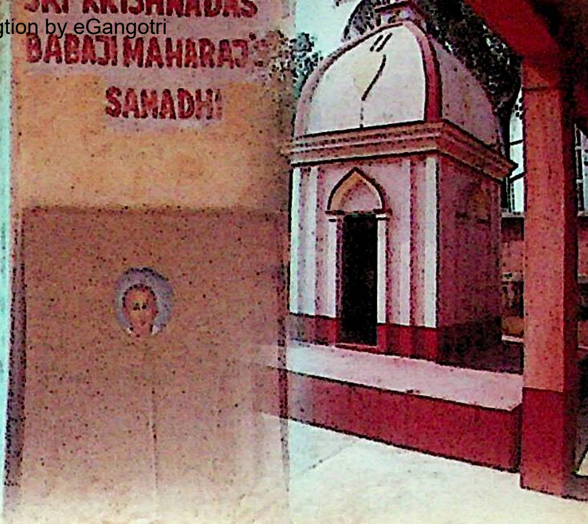
1. The main altar has a *mūrti* of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and (around the corner) his personal deities, Śrī Śrī Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita.

2. On the left, just inside the front gate, are the deities of Kṣetra-pāla Śiva and his bull-carrier, Nandī.

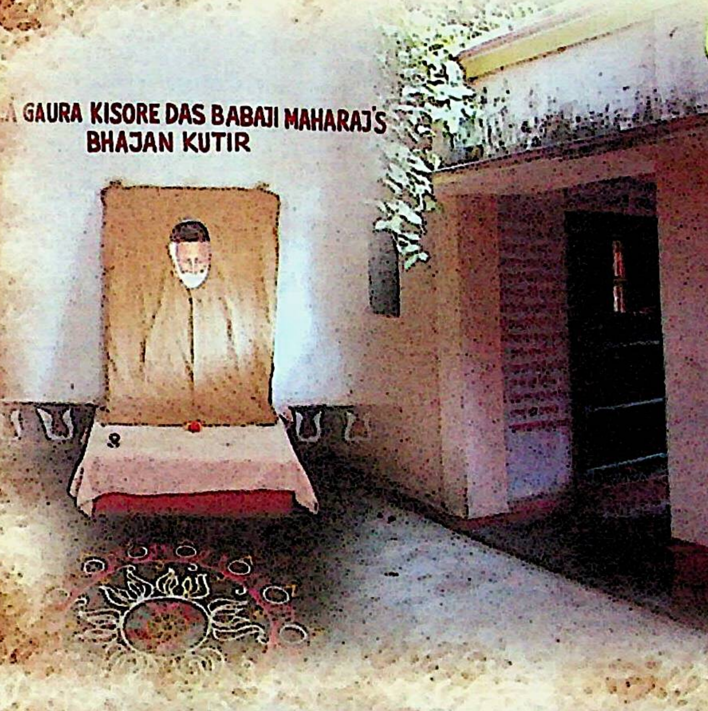


PLACES OF INTEREST:

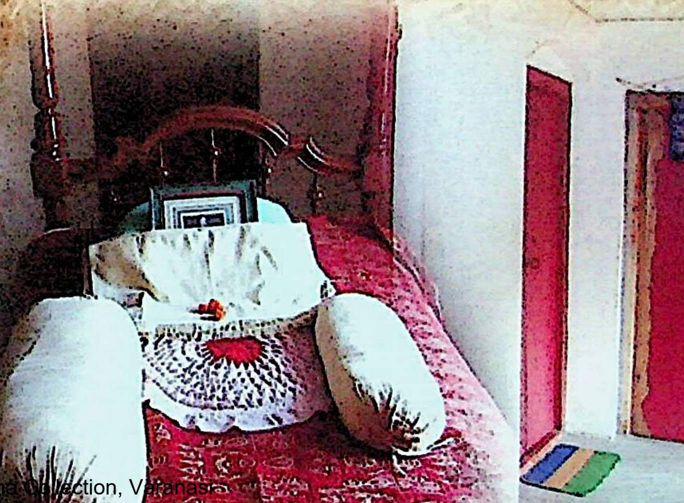
1. Place of honor: On the left side of the main altar is a small place honoring Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's dedicated servant, Kṛṣṇa dāsa.



2. *Bhajana-kuṭīra* of Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī: On the right of the main altar is the place where Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī had a *bhajana-kuṭīra*. He spent many hours chanting here while visiting Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Previously the doorway to this hut was facing the back wall, reflecting Gaurakiśora dāsa Bābājī's humble mood, but now it has been changed to face the main courtyard for the convenience of visitors.



3. House: It is on the left side of the property. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's room is the first room at the top of the stairs. It has some of his personal belongings. This is where he wrote many of his newsletters and books. The verandah outside this room is where Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura saw the visions of Lord Caitanya in *kīrtana* and the golden city of Mahāprabhu. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's room is next to his father's.



SUVARṆA-VIHĀRA

... suvarṇa-sena-durge sa
nanarta kīrtane hariḥ

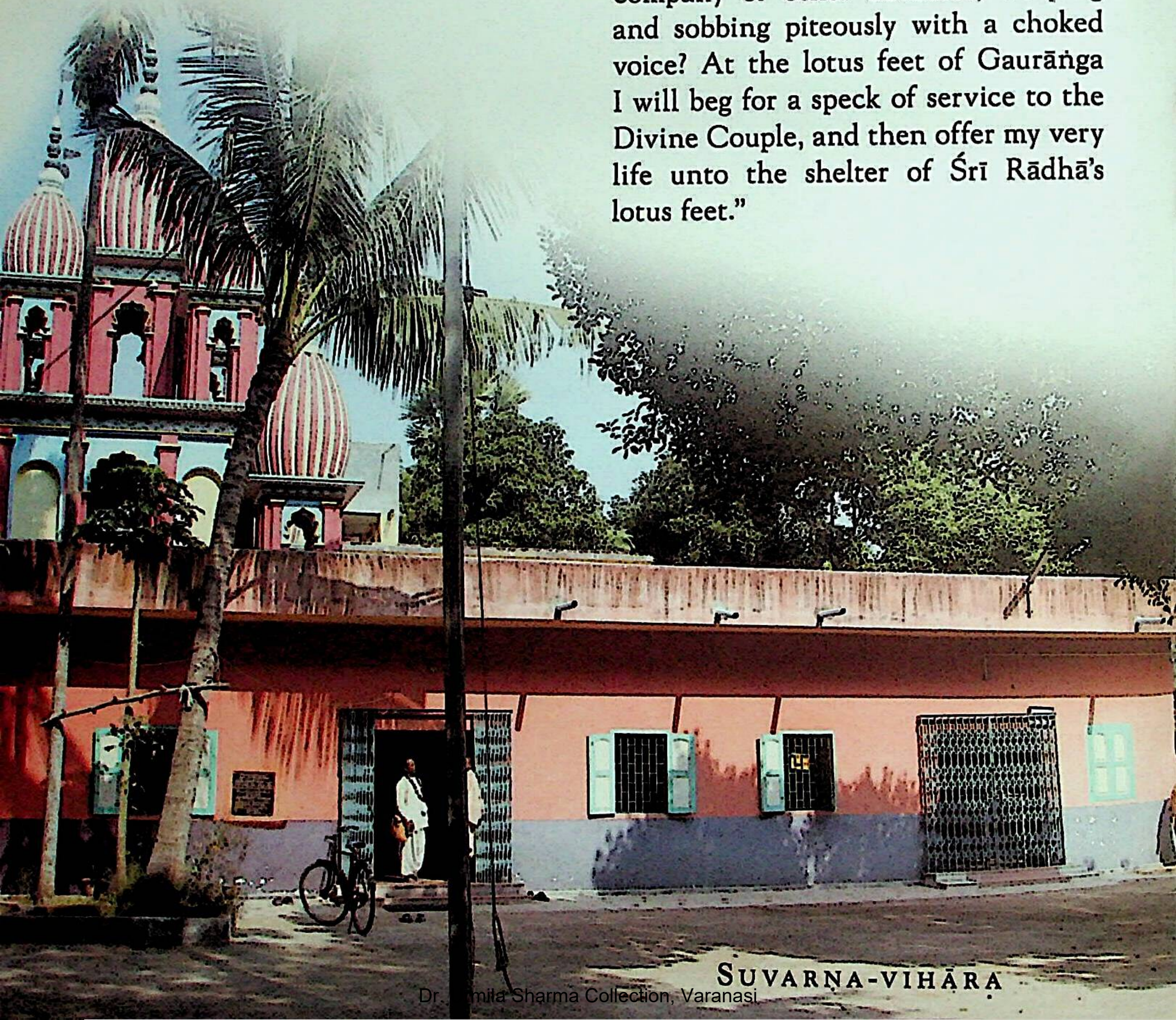
"Śrī Hari danced in *kīrtana* at the fort of King Suvarṇa Sena."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.37)

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes as follows:

"Looking east from there (Śrīdhara Āṅgana) I shall see Suvarṇa-vihāra, the site of King Suvarṇa Sena's incomparably majestic palace. This is where the moonlike Lord Śrī Gauracandra dances along with His associates in an enchanting golden form.

"When will I wander throughout Suvarṇa-vihāra, alone or in the company of other devotees, weeping and sobbing piteously with a choked voice? At the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga I will beg for a speck of service to the Divine Couple, and then offer my very life unto the shelter of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet."



SUVARṆA-VIHĀRA

Dr. Pramila Sharma Collection, Varanasi

KING SUVARṆA SENA RECEIVES DARŚANA OF LORD GAURĀṄGA

Suvarṇa-vihāra is located in Godrumadvīpa on the southern side of the River Sarasvatī. This river is at present known as the Jalāṅgī. Lord Nityānanda described this place to Śrī Jīva as follows:

During Satya-yuga King Suvarṇa Sena was ruling here. He had ruled his kingdom for a long time and even though he had become very old he was still very attached to his kingly duties. He was always engrossed in material life and once due to his good fortune Nārada Muni visited his palace. The king was very happy to see Nārada Muni and welcomed the sage by worshiping him nicely. He offered prostrated obeisance to Nārada Muni, who then took the king to a solitary place and mercifully explained to him *tattva-upadeśa* (instructions about *tattva*). Nārada Muni said, "You are spending your days uselessly only meditating on how to increase your wealth. You should know very well that this material wealth is useless and the cause of all suffering. The real supreme wealth is transcendental knowledge. Please try to think about this for once seriously within your heart. None of your family members, like your wife and children and all your relatives, are yours eternally. At the time of your death no one will be yours. When you die, all your relatives will put your body into river water to float away and go back to their respective houses. If no one is a real relative of anyone then why you do run after these false hopes, hankering for so much material achievement? If you say that at least you are achieving pleasure in your life and are free from suffering and that is your justification for trying to accumulate so much wealth, dear king, that is also false, because this body will be destroyed one day. It will not exist for more than a hundred years. Therefore you should understand that the essence of everything is beyond this illusory material world in the spiritual world, where there is no trace of suffering in the enjoyment. In this material world some enjoyment is there but it always comes along with suffering. One should know how to cross over material nescience. What kind of *sādhana* should one follow to achieve that wonderful result of going back to Godhead, where there is no sorrow or suffering? Not only by renunciation nor just by knowledge can one achieve that. By knowledge and renunciation one may become free from material bondage and get liberation. But by achieving that kind of liberation one does not get real pleasure. In fact to get that kind of liberation is the greatest loss, because material pleasure is lost and at the same time not much worthwhile is achieved. Therefore the actually intelligent person will not accept *bhukti* or *mukti*, material sense gratification or liberation. Rather they practice devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To be detached from material things and attached to the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is everything in one's life – *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana*.

The *jīva* is the eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Without *bhakti* everything is destroyed. The tree of *bhakti*, *bhakti-vṛkṣa*, gives the fruit of *premā*. That fruit is *prayojana* or the final goal of life. That *kṛṣṇa-premā* is our eternal wealth, in comparison to which *bhukti* and *mukti* are insignificant. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*. He is like the sun, the *jīvas* are like rays of the sun and *māyā* is the shadow. The *jīva* is the *taṭasthā* energy of the Lord and due to his marginal nature, when he comes in contact with *māyā* she puts him in bondage. When the *jīva* becomes *kṛṣṇa-bahirmukha* or turns his face away from Kṛṣṇa, he touches *māyā*.

By coming in contact with *māyā* the *jīva* falls into the bondage of *karma*. Being caught by the net of *māyā* the *jīva* moves around in the material universes and undergoes lots of suffering. Due to his attachment to *karma* he does not get liberation even if he tries his best to be free from suffering. Sometimes the *jīva* engages in *karma*, sometimes he engages in the *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* process, sometimes he discusses *brahma-jñāna*. Sometimes he engages in logic. In spite of all these he ultimately remains in bondage, due to his non-acceptance of the real wealth of knowledge about the science of the self. If the *jīva*, while traversing this material world, gets the association of a *sādhu* then he will achieve *śraddhā* or faith. In due course of time by practicing devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the association of devotees, his heart will become free from *anarthas*, unwanted desires, and then he will achieve *niṣṭhā*, steadiness. After continuing his *bhajana*, at some time due to that *niṣṭhā*, he will develop *ruci* or taste and then later he will develop attachment or *āsakti* to the Lord. From *āsakti* he will attain *bhāva*, which will later bring him to the platform of *premā*. This is the gradual process of achieving pure devotion. By practicing the nine kinds of devotional service in the association of devotees, one will achieve the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-premā*."

Nārada Muni continued, "Oh, King! You are very fortunate to have taken birth in Navadvīpa. By residing in this Navadvīpa-dhāma you have achieved great fortune. Now you should try to develop *śraddhā* by the association of *sādhus*. Strive to achieve *premā* by engaging in the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. When Kali-yuga comes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with His associates will manifest here for His *gaurāṅga-līlā*. One who chants the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga will get the mercy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and will become eligible to reside in Vraja-dhāma. One who worships Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa without chanting the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga will get Śrī Kṛṣṇa after a long time, but one who chants the holy name of Gaurāṅga will attain Śrī Kṛṣṇa immediately, because by chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga he will become free from all offenses."

While speaking to King Suvarṇa Sena in this way, Nārada Muni became very impatient. Due to great ecstasy he could not control himself any more and started dancing, chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga. He was playing on his *vīṇā*, chanting the name of Gaurahari and asking, "When will that most blessed Kali-yuga come?" While speaking these words Nārada Muni left. Just at that moment King Suvarṇa Sena developed *kṛṣṇa-premā* and started to dance, chanting the name of Gaurāṅga. He was asking for *kṛṣṇa-premā* from all the Vaiṣṇavas and thus became free from all material desires.

Once when the king was sleeping, he dreamt that Gaura-Gadādhara along with all Their associates were dancing in his courtyard. All of them were chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and embracing the golden form of Lord Gaurahari. When the king woke up, he became very worried and started to cry for Gaurāṅga. Suddenly he heard a voice, "O, King! You will appear here again during the manifested pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga. You will be one of the great associates of the Lord. Your name will be Buddhimanta Khān. During that time you will serve the lotus feet of the Lord." After hearing this *daiva-vāṇī* (heavenly voice) the king became pacified and started to worship Lord Gaurāṅga.

While Lord Nityānanda was describing this subject to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura, who is an incarnation of Nārada Muni, Śrīvāsa in the mood of Nārada Muni fainted. Everyone very ecstatically started to chant the nectarine holy name of Gaurāṅga and Śrī Jīva was rolling around on the ground. All of them were anticipating and praying for the *darśana* of the golden form of Gaurāṅga. Immediately, to their surprise, the most beautiful form of Gaurāṅga appeared there right in front of them and He started to dance. Nityānanda along with Śrī Advaita Ācārya began chanting the glories of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and there was a big *saṅkīrtana* with many *mṛdaṅgas*.

GADĀDHARA

Thus the previous *saṅkīrtana* pastimes were manifested and all of them remained there in great jubilation until the second *prahara* (midnight).

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya,
Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Ṭhākura in his book *Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara* has explained the pastimes at Suvarṇa-vihāra as follows:

Once Īśāna Ṭhākura took Śrī Śrīnivāsa on *parikramā* and described how this place became known as Suvarṇa-vihāra.

In this country there was a most fortunate king who was a great devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nārada Muni has many disciples and grand-disciples, one of whom came to the king's palace one day. The king received him with great respect and offered him prostrated obeisances. The king then asked him about the advent of the Lord. With very pleasing and sweet words he (the disciple of Nārada Muni) explained to the king, "The Lord will descend in Kali-yuga accepting a golden color and exhibit wonderful pastimes. He will be engaged in *saṅkīrtana* which is rarely witnessed by the demigods including Brahmā. The Lord will be mad with *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and will make the whole world mad. Just as the Lord danced in *mahā-rāsa* in Vṛndāvana, in the same way He will dance and give pleasure to all His devotees. All Navadvīpa will be filled with happiness. No one can understand the glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma unless the associates of the Lord explain them to him." After speaking in this way to the king, that great Vaiṣṇava blessed him and left.

Hearing his words the king thought to himself, "Shame on my life, shame on my birth as a human being. I always engaged in kingly activities. It is my bad fortune that I never had the association of devotees. Without the association of devotees no one achieves perfection in anything.

After such a long period this most merciful sādhu has now blessed me. Now I know this Nadia is the abode of my Lord."

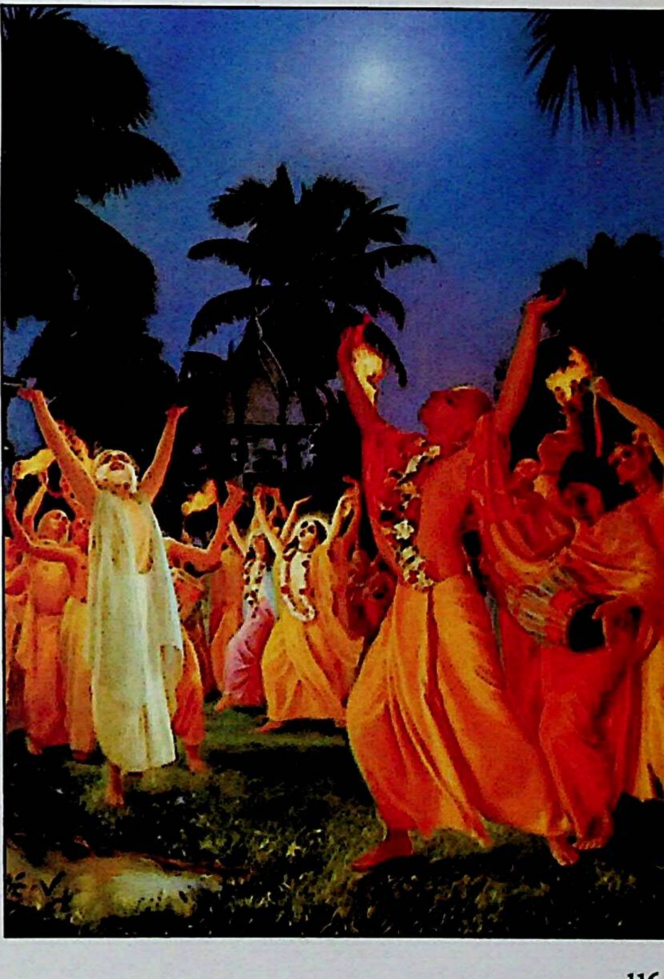
Considering this he felt ecstasy in his heart and started to shed tears looking towards Navadvīpa while offering prostrated obeisances to the holy *dhāma*. He prayed to Navadvīpa-dhāma to bless him so that he could take birth at the time when the Lord would manifest His pastimes there.

Just then a voice said, "You will take birth here in Nadia when the Lord descends and manifests His pastimes." Although the king was happy to hear this he was still impatient. Bhakta-vatsala Bhagavān Viśvambhara, under the pretext of a dream, revealed to the king His wonderful pastimes. The king saw thousands of devotees playing different varieties of musical instruments and singing in a very sweet way which attracted the whole world. Among those devotees, he saw the moon of Nadia, Śrī Gauracandra, in His most beautiful blue form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa appearing like a stream of nectar. The king saw the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra and immediately that blue form transformed to gold. The king started to think, "Who is this golden form (*suvarṇa-vigraha*) moving (*vihāra*) in the crowd of *saṅkīrtana*?" While the king was thinking like this his dream ended. He became pacified and glorified his own good fortune. Because he meditated on the Lord in His golden form (*suvarṇa-vigraha*) who was moving (*vihāra*) there, this place is named "Suvarṇa-vihāra".

The king started to think, "Who is this golden form (*suvarṇa-vigraha*) moving (*vihāra*) in the crowd of *saṅkīrtana*?"

At this very place Lord Gaurāṅga was present in His manifested pastime. He performed *saṅkīrtana* here and many people relished seeing His dancing. With great ecstasy people would speak to each other, "We have never seen such a beautiful complexion. There is no comparison to it. His moving and dancing is so wonderful that it attracts the people of the three worlds."

The mind of one who takes *darśana* of Suvarṇa-vihāra will drown in the pastimes of Gaurāṅga.



SUVARṆA-VIHĀRA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: 6-10 a.m. and 3-8 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Leaving the Harihara temple return to the Āmghāṭa Railway Station and turn right. Continue down the main road for a short distance. Take the road on the left at Syāmpur Bazar and turn right at the end onto a smaller dirt road. After you go past some houses the road will become smaller and you will come to a number of small paths leading in different directions. Take the second path on the left. You will pass a large campaka tree on the right side of the path. The temple is at the end of this short path.

PRESIDING DEITIES: Life-sized Lord Caitanya plus Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa.

POINT OF INTEREST:

Palace ruins: Although the ruins of King Suvarṇa Sena's palace used to be visible in the nearby mango orchard, they had to be moved near the temple as they were being gradually stolen. If you ask the helpful devotees here, they will show you what is left of the original ruins of the palace.

HARE KRISHNA
সত্য যুগের পবিত্র শি
দর্শন করুন
VISIT THE HOLY STONE
GOLDEN-AGE
सत्य युग का पवित्र शिला दर्शन कि

ĀMRA-GHĀṬA (AMGHAT)

Āmra-ghāṭa is where Lord Caitanya performed the miracle of planting a mango (*āmra*) seed, which immediately grew into a tree full of ripened mangoes. The devotees immediately picked around two hundred mangoes and then offered them to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Daily, after *kīrtana* with Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu, the devotees would hold a mango eating festival. The tree would give mangoes all year without interruption and the fruits were all red and yellow and had neither seeds inside nor skins outside. By eating only one the devotee was satisfied. Every day for one year, Lord Caitanya and the devotees would enjoy eating mangoes at this place. At the end of the year, the mango tree disappeared.

ĀMRA-GHĀṬA
PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: Turn right outside Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's house and continue down the same road. You will see a railway line on the right of the road and, after a few kilometers, a signboard for the "Amghat Railway Station". Almost immediately after that, on the left, is the mango grove. It is about twenty minutes by rickshaw from Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's house.

HARIHARA-KṢETRA AND MAHĀ-VĀRĀṆASĪ

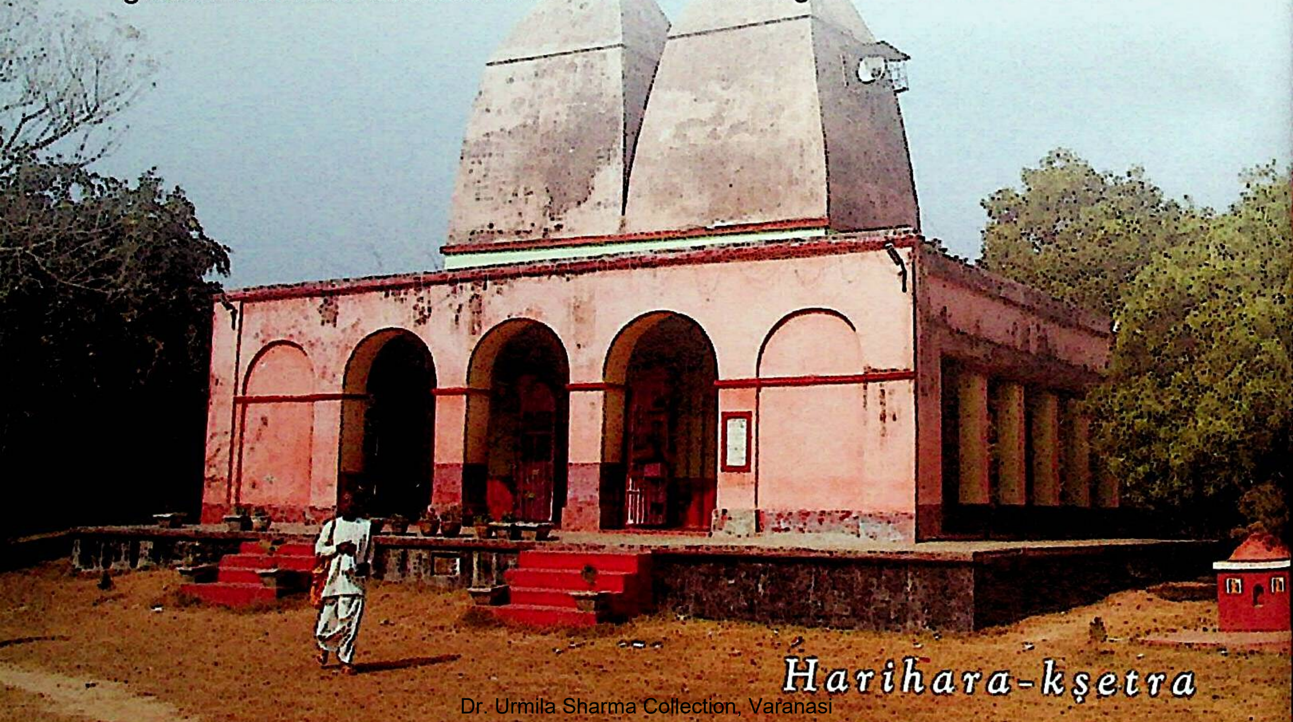
kṣetraṁ hari-haraṁ tīrtvā
kāśīṁ ca mokṣa-dāyinīm ...

"Lord Śrī Hari crossed Śrī Harihara-kṣetra and Kāśī-kṣetra which gives liberation ..."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.39)

Harihara-kṣetra is situated in Godrumadvīpa on the eastern bank of the Alakanandā River. At present this river is not flowing but a portion of the river is still visible. In the temple of Harihara-kṣetra there is a deity who is half Lord Śiva and half Lord Viṣṇu. The western side of the Alakanandā is considered non-different from Kāśī (Vārāṇasī), in fact this place is greater than Kāśī and known as Mahā-Vārāṇasī. Here Lord Śiva is dancing, chanting the holy name "Gaura Gaura". He offers his associates devotion unto Lord Gaurāṅga. *Sannyāsīs* get liberation after cultivating *jñāna* for thousands of years in Kāśī. The devotees here at Mahā-Vārāṇasī reject that offer of liberation and dance in ecstasy chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga. Lord Śiva delivers anyone who dies here by chanting the name of Gaurāṅga in his ear at the time of death. Living entities have no fear at this Mahā-Vārāṇasī-dhāma.

Explaining the glories of this place Lord Nityānanda started to dance in ecstasy, offering *gaura-premā* to all the living entities. At that time Kailāsa-pati Lord Śiva invisibly came there and offered his obeisances to Lord Nityānanda bowing his head in front of Him. Here Lord Śiva and his consort Gaurī chant the holy name of Gaurāṅga to fulfil their desires.



Harihara-kṣetra

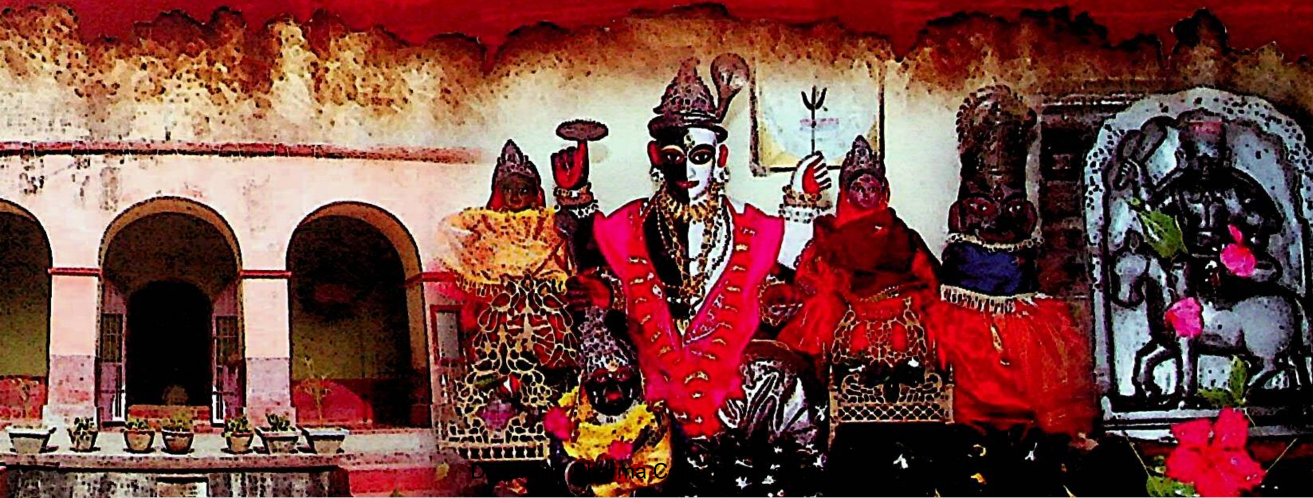
HARIHARA-KṢETRA and MAHĀ-VĀRĀṆASĪ

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: From 10.00 a.m. -12.00 and 4.00-6.00 p.m

DIRECTIONS: Return to the Amghat Railway Station and cross the railway lines. Go down the small dirt road on the side of the station where the Amghat sign is. Continue on this small road passing two small roads on the left side. After passing the second road on the left, you will make a sharp left turn. You will then see this place in the open area on the right of the road. It is on the bank of the Alakanandā River.

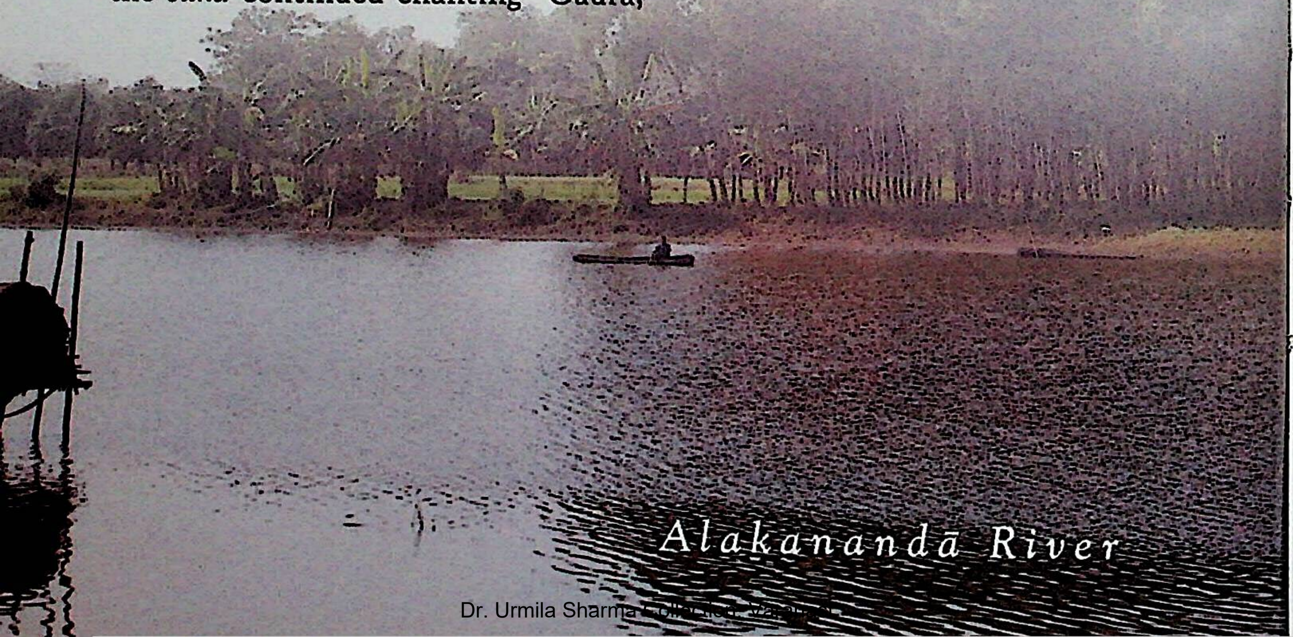
PRESIDING DEITIES: The main deity is Śrī Harihara. He is half Lord Viṣṇu (black side) and half Lord Śiva (white side). You will see Lord Viṣṇu's eternal consort, Lakṣmī-devī, on the left, and Lord Śiva's eternal consort, Pārvatī-devī, on the right. There is a deity of Burho Śiva or Vṛddha Śiva (Old Śiva) with mustache and beard. You can also see a deity of Gopāla and the footprints of Lord Gadādhara. There is also a deity of Śītalā-devī on the floor riding on the horse.



ALAKANANDĀ

There was a very nice pastime of Mahāprabhu by the Alakanandā River, which, as mentioned previously, is presently not visible. Jagadānanda Paṇḍita has described this pastime very nicely in his book *Prema-vivarta*:

“One day my Lord, in a playful mood, went to the dense forest on the bank of Alakanandā. Myself and Gadādhara were both there with Mahāprabhu. The Lord playfully caught hold of a *śuka* (parrot) from the *bakula* tree. Mahāprabhu said, ‘You are the son of Vyāsadeva. Please chant Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and increase our happiness.’ The *śuka*, however, did not chant the holy name of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa but instead chanted “Gaurahari”. Then Mahāprabhu threw him away pretending that He was angry with him because the bird was not chanting the holy name of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Still the *śuka* continued chanting “Gaura, Gaura” and danced with great love. Mahāprabhu said, ‘Oh, Śuka! This is Vṛndāvana. Please chant the holy name of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and let everybody hear the holy name.’ The bird replied, ‘Vṛndāvana has transformed into Navadvīpa. Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have appeared as Śrī Gaurahari. I am the *śuka* who chants the holy name of Śrī Gaurahari and stays in this forest. You are my Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. This Gadādhara is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Gadāi and Gaurāṅga are the Lords of my life. Nothing else comes from my mouth.’ Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu said, ‘I am a worshiper of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. I feel sad to hear any other name.’ Saying this Mahāprabhu caught hold of Gadādhara’s hand and went back to Māyāpur leaving behind the *śuka* who said, “You chant whatever You like. I will do my *bhajana* here eternally, chanting the holy name of Gaurahari.”



Alakanandā River

DEVAPALLĪ OR NARASIṀHA PALLĪ

deva-pallīṁ tato gatvā
devān sūrya-mukhān prabhuḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-kīrtanānande
plāvayām āsa bhāmini

"Oh, Bhāminī! (After visiting Suvarṇa-vihāra) the Lord went to Devapallī. There he drowned the demigods headed by Sūrya with the bliss of chanting the holy name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.38)

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Devapallī as follows:

"Southeast of Suvarṇa-vihāra there is Nṛsiṁha Purī. When will I see the pure transcendental sweetness of this place, also called Devapallī? I will roll about on the ground in ecstatic love while visiting this residence of Lord Nṛsiṁha. Sincerely begging for His grace without a trace of duplicity in my heart, I will attain *kṛṣṇa-premā*.

Within my sinful heart the six enemies headed by lust perpetually reside, as well as duplicity, the desire for fame, and sheer cunning. At the lotus feet of Lord Nṛsiṁha, I hope that He will mercifully purify my heart and give me the desire to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Weeping, I will beg at the lotus feet of Lord Nṛsiṁha for the benediction of worshipping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Navadvīpa, perfectly safe and free from all difficulties. When will this Lord Hari, whose terrible form strikes fear into fear itself, ever become pleased and show me His mercy?

Even though Lord Nṛsiṁha is terrifying toward the sinful souls He offers great auspiciousness unto the devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa headed by Prahlāda Mahārāja. When will He be pleased to speak words of compassion unto me, a worthless fool, and thereby make me fearless?

He will say, 'Dear child! Sit down freely and live happily here in Śrī Gaurāṅga-dhāma. May you nicely worship the Divine Couple and may you develop loving attachment for Their holy names. By the mercy of My devotees, all obstacles are cast far away. With a purified heart, just perform the worship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, for such worship overflows with sweet nectar.'

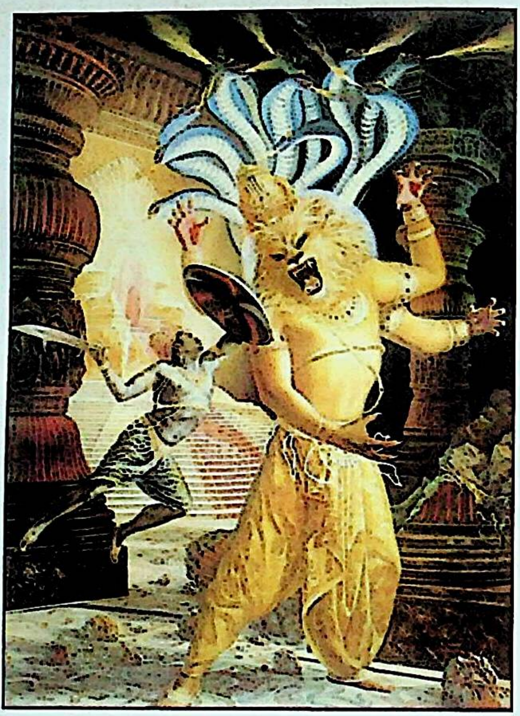
Saying this, will that Lord delightedly place His own divine lotus feet upon my head? Suddenly I will experience sublime love for the divine couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and undergo the ecstatic transformations called the *sāttvika-vikāras*. Falling on the ground, I will roll about by the door of Śrī Nṛsiṁha's temple."

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

LORD NARASIṀHADEVA'S TEMPLE

The following is a description of Devapallī from *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*:

After visiting Suvarṇa-vihāra Lord Nityānanda along with Śrī Jīva and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura proceeded towards the village Devapallī. This place is also known as Narasiṁha Pallī. All of them took rest there as guests of the demigods and took their lunch *prasāda*. Towards the end of the day Nityānanda Prabhu went on a tour of the village. He explained that in this village there is a temple of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva from the time of Satya-yuga. Being merciful upon Prahlāda, Lord Narasiṁha killed his father Hiraṇyakaśipu who was giving so much trouble to his son. After killing Hiraṇyakaśipu Lord Narasiṁha came to this place and took rest here for some time. Knowing that Lord Narasiṁha had come to take rest here, all the demigods including Brahmā built their houses here and thus created a village. They built their houses on the bank of the Mandākinī on top of a hillock and all engaged in the service of the Lord. Since that time this place has been known as Narasiṁha-kṣetra in Navadvīpa-dhāma. The scriptures describe this place as very purifying. Previously there were many hillocks there where the houses of Brahmā, Sūryadeva, Gaṇeśa and Indra were situated. There were many *ṭilās* where Viśvakarmā built hundreds of houses out of stone. In due course of time the River Mandākinī dried up and all the houses were destroyed. Now only the hillocks are there but you can see many stones lying around which are the ruins of the temples of different demigods. It is also said that Lord Narasiṁha washed His hands in the pond next to the temple.



Lord Narasiṁha

After some time a great person or king will come and by the mercy of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva, he will build a temple for Lord Nṛsiṁha Bhagavān here and revive the worship of the Lord. This place marks the outer limit of Navadvīpa-dhāma which extends up to sixteen *krośas* or 32 miles.

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LORD NARASIMHADEVA'S TEMPLE

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: usually 10-12 a.m.

DIRECTIONS FROM ISKCON: Go down Bhaktisidhānta Road until you reach the main road to Calcutta. Turn right onto this road. After the Krishnanagar turn-off and after going under the railway overbridge, continue straight down the Navadvīpa-Krishnanagar highway (do not turn left at the intersection as that will take you to Calcutta). Narasiṁha Pallī is just before a lake (on the left side of the road) and a sharp right turn in the road. The distance is about twenty-seven kilometers. A taxi will take around forty-five minutes to get there.

Presiding deity: Lord Narasiṁhadeva with Hiraṇyakaśipu on His lap and Prahlāda at His feet. This self-manifest deity dates back to Satya-yuga.

POINT OF INTEREST:

1. The Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust built the *kīrtana* hall here.
2. This temple is located on the eastern and southern boundaries of Navadvīpa-dhāma and is known by the names Narasiṁha Purī and Devapallī (neighbourhood of the *devas*). It has been famous since Satya-yuga when Narasiṁhadeva came to rest here after killing the demon Hiraṇyakaśipu.
3. Next to the temple is a lake left behind by the Mandākinī River that flowed here at that time. When Lord Narasiṁhadeva arrived here, He drank the sweet waters of this river to refresh Himself and also washed the blood of Hiraṇyakaśipu from His hands.
4. The demigods followed Narasiṁhadeva here, constructed large palaces, and worshiped Him in great opulence. The changing course of the Mandākinī River covered the demigod's palaces and destroyed them and all that remains of them now is the hills that surround this area.

GAURA-DAHA

Gaura-daha is situated in Gādigāchā which is in Godrumadvīpa. Śrīla Jagadānanda Pāṇḍita has described one pastime of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu in Gādigāchā in his book *Prema-vivarta*:

"One day Śacī-mātā with great affection gave me the remnants of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. When I ate that *prasāda* I experienced the taste of nectar and was very happy to honor *gaurāṅga-prasāda*. Can I ever get that sumptuous *prasāda* again?

That day I proceeded towards the bank of the Gaṅgā along with Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda and Their associates. When we reached Gādigāchā village the devotees started *harināma-saṅkīrtana*. Govinda was playing *mṛdaṅga* and Vāsudeva Ghoṣa was chanting the holy name. Gadādhara Pāṇḍita and Vakreśvara Pāṇḍita were both dancing. Only the sound vibration of *hari-nāma* was heard and the *ulu-dhvani* was coming from all directions. Everyone was mad with *gaura-premā*. I do not know how to sing or dance but still I was dancing raising my hands. In fact Śrī Gaurāṅga was making me dance, entering into my body. I have no idea of *svara* or *tāla* (tune or rhythm) but I was dancing and chanting.

When we reached Gādigāchā village and entered into the cowherd people's village (Gopapallī), Gauracandra said, 'Oh, devotes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Please listen.

Today we will walk on the shore of this lake and sleep under the trees. Under this banyan tree there are many cows having fun. Today we will have pastimes with the gopas (cowherd people.)' Many gopas came and offered us milk, yogurt and butter.

After eating all these milk products we became free from our fatigue due to walking so far. There Nṛsiṁhānanda, Pradyumna and Puruṣottama Ācārya joined us in *saṅkīrtana*. By hearing the sound of the *mṛdaṅga* everyone left their houses and came to witness the *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. The sound of *hari-nāma* resounded in the sky.

In that village there was a cowherd man by the name of Bhīma Gopa, who was a very sober person. He came forward and said, 'Please listen to my appeal. My blessed mother Śyāmā

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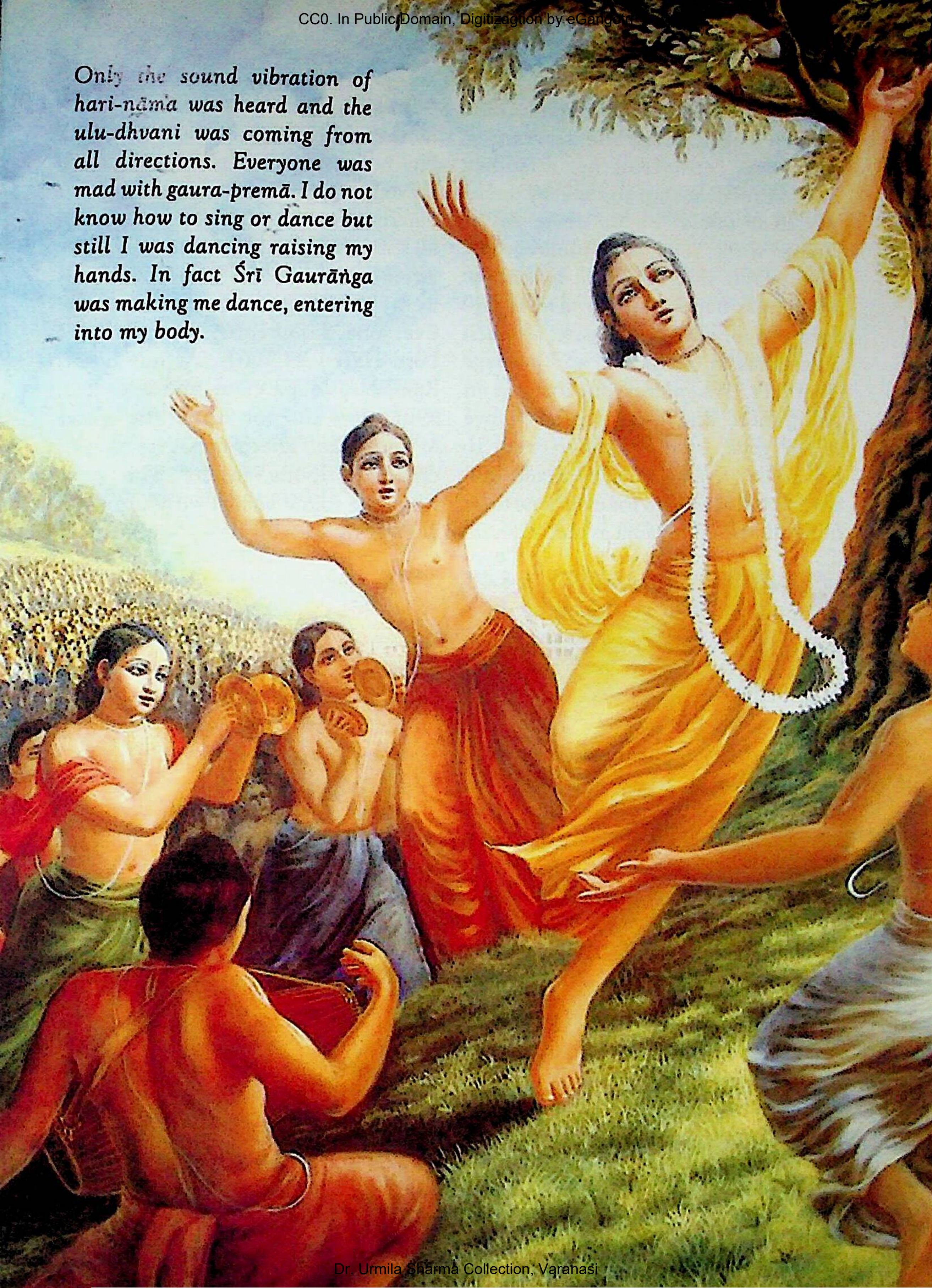
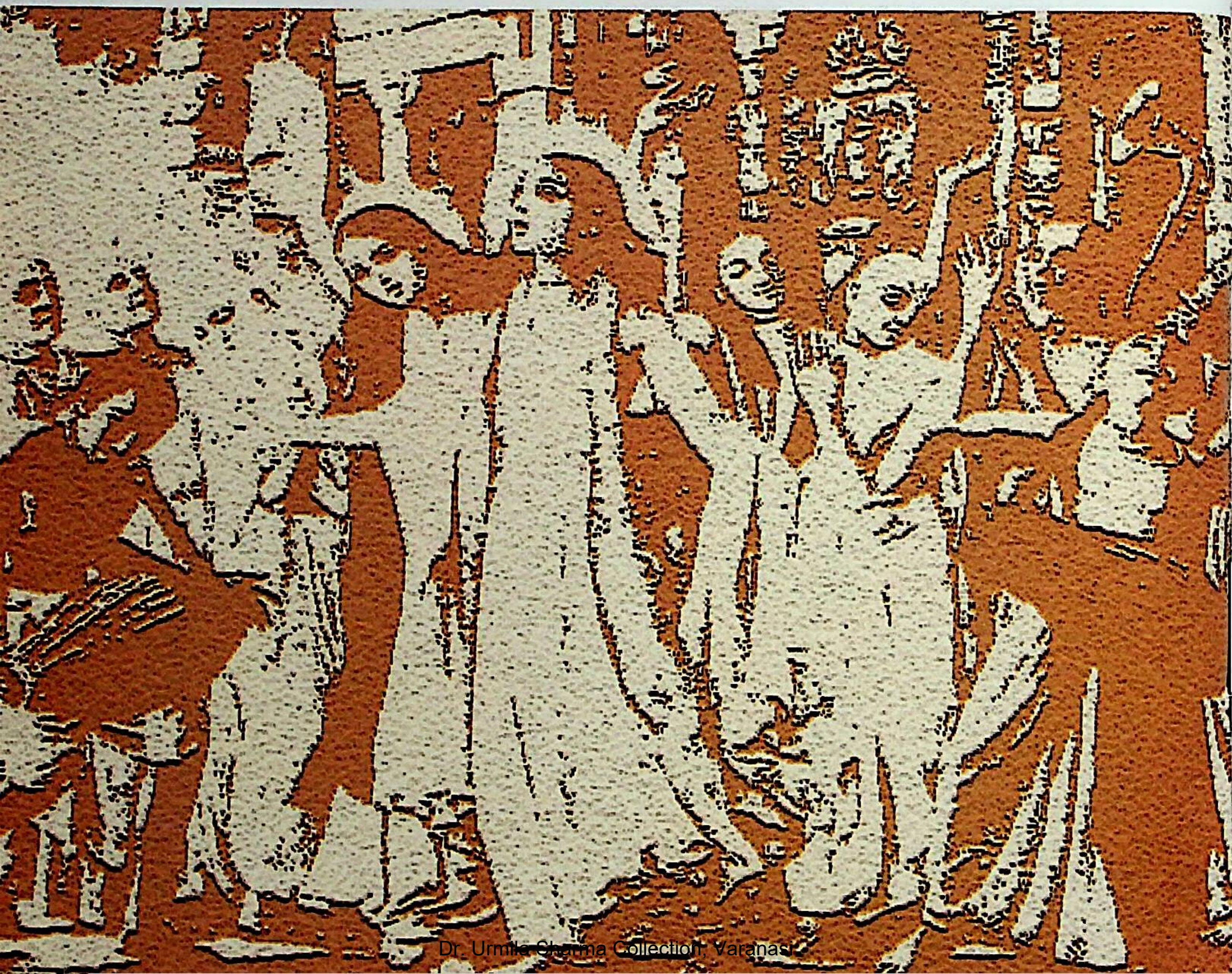
Only the sound vibration of hari-nāma was heard and the ulu-dhvani was coming from all directions. Everyone was mad with gaura-premā. I do not know how to sing or dance but still I was dancing raising my hands. In fact Śrī Gaurāṅga was making me dance, entering into my body.



Goālinī is the daughter of Sādhu Goālā from Gaṅgānagara. She serves Śacī Āi always considering her a mother. In that relationship you are my uncle. My dear uncle! Please come to my house with Your *saṅkīrtana* group. There You may perform *saṅkīrtana* with great happiness. My mother will feed you all milk and yogurt, as much as she has in our house, and massage Your feet.' When everyone insisted on going there, due to the unalloyed love of the *gopa*, Lord Gaurahari went to his house. Śyāmā Goālinī made *ulu-dhvani* and arranged for everyone to sit in her cowshed. Śyāmā asked, '*Paṇḍita dādā* (dear brother *paṇḍita*)! How is mother doing?' Lord Gaurāṅga shook His body saying, 'Fine, fine.' Śyāmā served yogurt and milk products on banana leaves and Nimāi along with all the devotees sat down to eat.

After finishing the *prasāda*, Nimāi went back to the shore of the lake. Everyone was chanting the glories of Lord Hari very softly. At one point, Rāmadāsa Gopa came and appealed, 'Our cows do not drink the water of this lake. There is a very fearful crocodile living inside. The cows make the sound *hāmbā* without taking water.' By hearing this Gauracandra



started chanting *śrī-nāma-saṅkīrtana* loudly and the crocodile was so attracted by the *kīrtana* that he came out of the lake and touched the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga. Immediately the crocodile transformed into a *deva-śiśu* (child of a demigod). The *deva-śiśu* offered prayers while crying and told the story of his suffering. He said, 'Oh, my Lord! I am roaming here in the form of a crocodile due to the curse of Durvāsā Muni. By seeing me everyone becomes frightened. Once, Durvāsā Muni was sleeping in Kāmyavana. Due to my naughty nature I cut off his locks. The sage became very angry with me and cursed me saying, 'You will get the form of a crocodile and for four *yugas* you will remain like this due to the result of your *karma*.' Hearing this curse I wept and pleaded with the *muni* asking him how I could be free from this curse. Being merciful upon me, he called me and said, 'O *deva-śiśu*! When Śrī Nanda-nandana will appear as Śacī-prāṇa-dhana in Navadvīpa, you will be freed from this curse by hearing His *kīrtana*. Thereafter you will go back to heaven by accepting a celestial body.'

Then the *deva-śiśu* offered prayers saying, 'All glories to Śacī-suta, the deliverer of fallen souls. You are the shelter of poor and fallen people who have no other shelter. The people of all fourteen planetary systems are announcing Your great deeds. You have delivered a fallen person like me. This Navadvīpa-dhāma is the cream of all *dhāmas*. Here Kali-patita-pāvana (deliverer of fallen souls of Kali-yuga) has appeared. You will deliver the living entities of Kali-yuga by giving them *hari-nāma*. O Mahāprabhu, You have come to me. I offer my humble obeisances unto You. I have been here in this form of a crocodile for four *yugas*. Now You have delivered me as Patita-pāvana Hari. The name of Hari from Your mouth is very sweet. You have delivered many animate and inanimate living entities. Please allow me to go back to heaven to meet with my father and mother and stay there happily.'

Saying this the *deva-śiśu* offered his obeisances and left the place. Again the tumultuous sound of *kīrtana* started and continued until midday. Then all the devotees along with Mahāprabhu went back to Māyāpur. Whoever hears this pastime of Mahāprabhu will be free from *brahma-śāpa*, the curse of a *brāhmaṇa*.

From that day that lake was known as Gaura-daha (*daha* means lake) and it became just like Kāliya-daha. Whoever takes *darśana* of this lake and touches it's water will be free from all sinful reactions and receive devotion unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

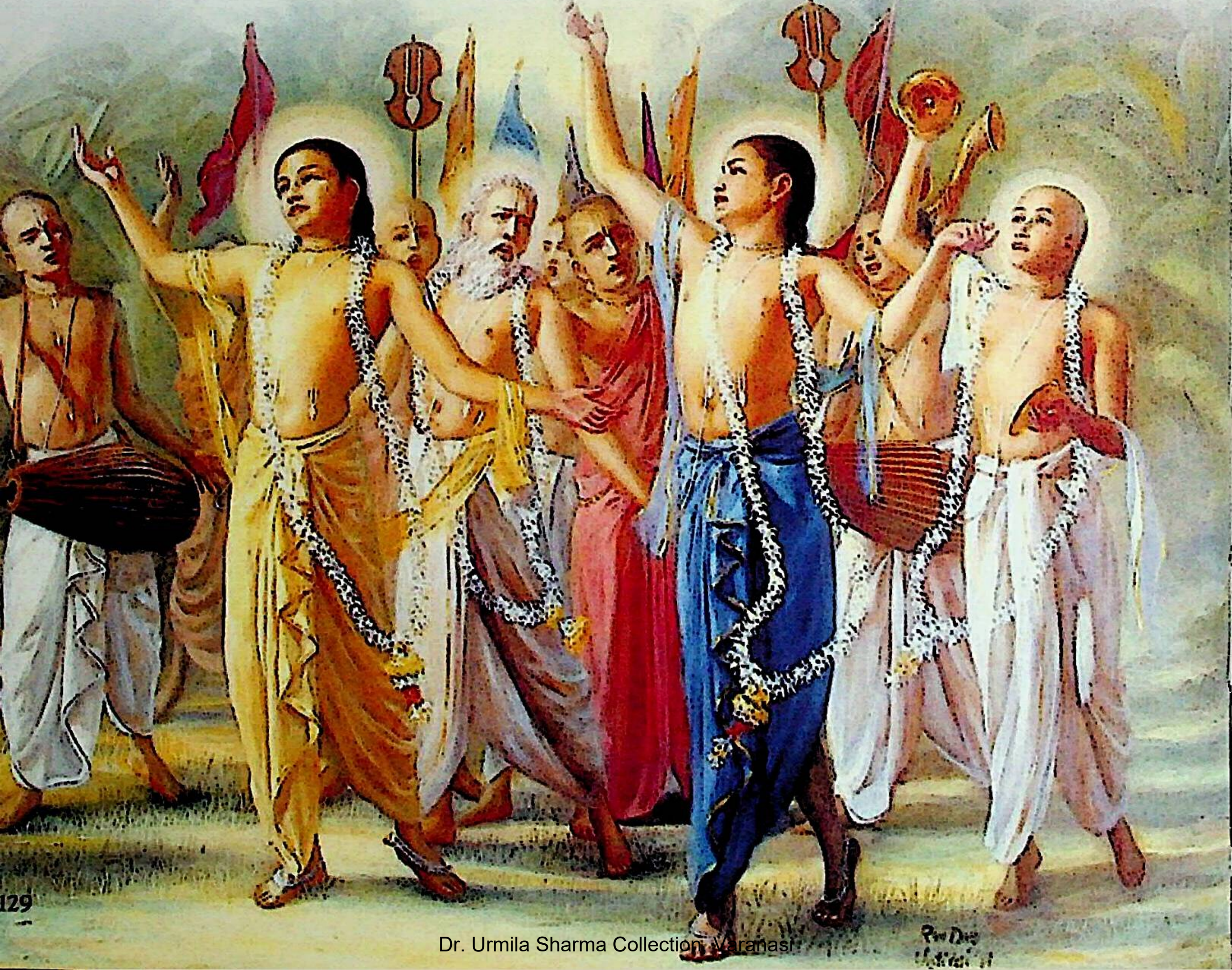
(Prema-vivarta)

Śrī Madhyadvīpa

This island represents ***smaraṇam***, remembering.

Places to visit on this island are the Haṁsa-vāhana temple, Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara, Pañcaveṇī, the Gomatī River and Naimiṣāraṇya.

In his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Madhyadvīpa as follows:



madhyadvīpaṁ tato gatvā ... "LORD GAURAHARI THEN WENT TO MADHYADVĪPA."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, *Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4. 40)

"South of Godruma lies the enchanting island of Madhyadvīpa. It is very beautiful to behold, filled with a radiant series of wonderful forests. There, during the midday period of His eternal pastimes, Prabhu takes His devotees along and comes to visit the seven *ṛṣis*.

... During the midday period of His eternal pastimes, Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga and His associates stroll throughout all these forests, overcome with madness of divine love. While the devotees give hints of Kṛṣṇa's confidential pastimes, Gaurāṅga sings and dances and tastes the sweet ecstatic emotions of Śrī Rādhā.

When will I, alone or in the company of devotees, float in the waves billowing on the ocean of love for Lord Caitanya? With utmost humility, I will wander around in the various forests of Madhyadvīpa during the midday period and contemplate the ecstatic emotional states felt by the Lord in those same places.

When will the devotees who are residents of Madhyadvīpa be merciful and show me, 'Oh look! Here is our Lord, Gaurāṅga Śrī Hari!' On the bank of Brahma-kuṇḍa within the town of Brāhmaṇanagara He is dancing and chanting with His associates in a grand *kīrtana*.

> *When will I see that astounding form of Gaura with a beautiful complexion like pure gold, wearing a garland of forest flowers, with two long arms, and booming in a loud voice, 'O brothers! All of you please chant the holy name in unison!'*

At that moment, all the devotees headed by Śrīvāsa will shout 'Hari! Hari!' and begin performing *saṅkīrtana*. Someone will exclaim, 'Chant the name of Gaurahari, dear brother! Without Gaura we cannot attain the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa!'"

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

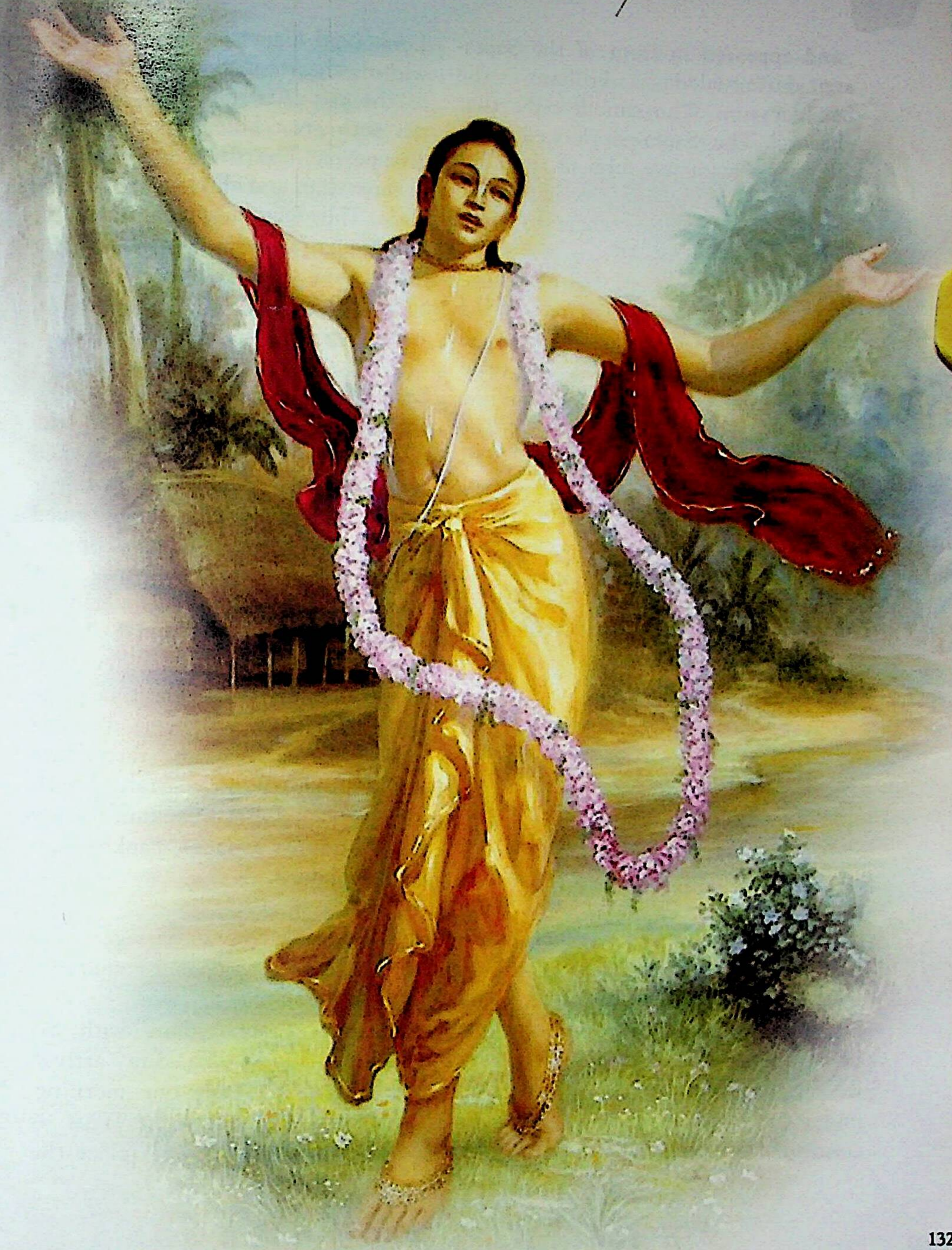
WHY IS THIS ISLAND NAMED MADHYADVĪPA?

The following is an excerpt from the *Bhakti-ratnākara*:

Īśāna Ṭhākura told Śrīnivāsa, "This island is now known as the Mājidā village. Previously it was called Madhyadvīpa. Lord Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu performed many wonderful pastimes on this island. Now I will tell you why this island was previously known as Madhyadvīpa.

Long ago the Sapta-ṛṣis (seven sages) were living here, engaged in discussing the wonderful pastimes of the Lord. They meditated upon His unlimited qualities while exploring Navadvīpa-dhāma. Some *ṛṣis* were saying, 'Just behold Navadvīpa-dhāma! It is so beautiful due to being blessed by the pastimes of the Lord. All the holy places of the world are residing here in Nadia.' Some *ṛṣis* said, 'The glories of Navadvīpa-dhāma are unlimited. The Lord performs so many wonderful pastimes here during His manifested and unmanifested periods. During His *prakaṭa* or manifested period everyone can take *darśana* of the Lord. During His *aprakaṭa* or unmanifested period only the most fortunate souls can get *darśana* of His pastimes.' Others said, 'The Lord will appear in the house of Jagannātha Miśra to bless this Kali-yuga. In this incarnation He will accept a *gaura* or golden-colored body which has no comparison. The whole world will be mad with desire to see His beautiful form.' Some said, 'This pastime of Kṛṣṇa in Nadia is so wonderful that even the great demigods like Brahmā do not know about it. Śacī-nandana is free to do whatever He wants. It is not possible to predict His actions. In Kali-yuga He will distribute the most sought-after jewel of *kṛṣṇa-premā* to all living entities with great care.' Someone said, 'Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is an ocean of mercy. The mercy He will give to living entities has never been distributed in this way before. He will take the devotees of all the incarnations along with Him, He will be madly absorbed in *saṅkīrtana-yajña* and infect the whole world with His divine madness. Lord Gaurahari is the life of His devotees. He will take *sannyāsa* and travel widely and in so doing He will fulfil the desires of the unlimited *tīrthas* or holy places. Finally, for the pleasure of Lord Jagannātha, He will stay in Śrī Kṣetra Purī-dhāma.'

In this way the *ṛṣis* would discuss amongst themselves with great pleasure, constantly in meditation upon the lotus feet of the Lord. The *ṛṣis* displayed such great love and devotion that Bhakta-vatsala Bhagavān Gaurahari could not control Himself anymore



and appeared in front of the Sapta-ṛṣis during midday, as brilliant as the midday sun. Who can describe that beauty? The Sapta-ṛṣis looked upon this most attractive form of the Lord without blinking, their bodies shook in ecstasy and tears came to their eyes. They were all offering prostrated obeisances to the Lord, falling on the ground again and again. They offered many prayers and circumambulated the Lord, saying, 'Oh Lord! All of us have a great desire to see Your pastimes in Nadia to the full satisfaction of our eyes. Please bless us so that we will meditate upon Navadvīpa constantly and always chant the glories of Your devotees.'

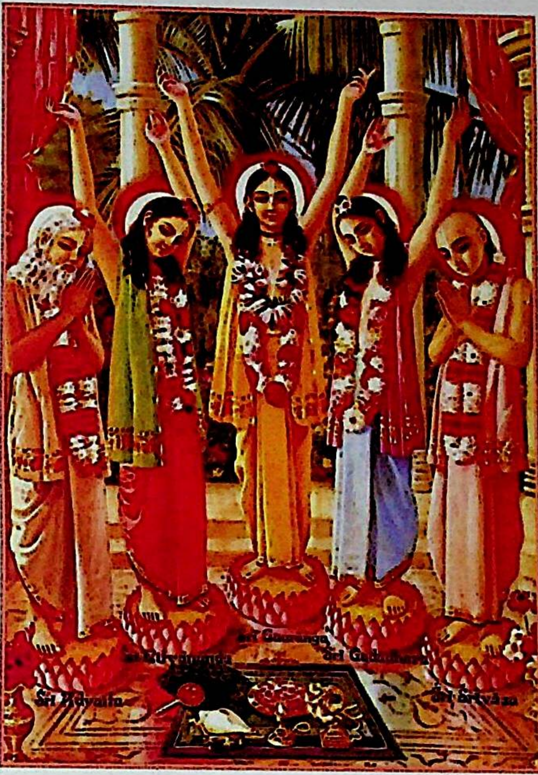
> They also lamented not having thousands of eyes with which to see this transcendental form of the Lord.

Being pleased with the prayers of the Sapta-ṛṣis the Lord said, 'All your desires will be fulfilled. My Navadvīpa pastimes are very confidential. If you keep this information concealed, I will be very happy.' Hearing this from the Lord, the *ṛṣis* said, 'Prabhu! What can we say? Is it possible to hide the sun under the palm?' In this way the *ṛṣis* continued their glorification of the Lord. Lord Gauracandra was smiling within, hearing the sweet words of the *ṛṣis*. After blessing all seven *ṛṣis* with great bliss Lord Gaurahari disappeared. The *ṛṣis* became distressed in separation and all of them left that place. They found a suitable spot near Kumāra-haṭṭa on the bank of the River Gaṅgā and settled there. This place became very famous and is still known as Sapta-ṛṣi-ghāṭa.

Because the Lord appeared during midday (*madhyāhna*), just like the midday sun, this place is called Madhyadvīpa. After the Sapta-ṛṣis left this place, other *ṛṣis* continued their *tapasya* here and they all spread the glories of Madhyadvīpa. Just by taking *darśana* of this place all inauspiciousness is destroyed. By living here one will achieve pure devotion. This is a most wonderful pastime place of Lord Gaurāṅga who made everyone mad by giving them the rarest love of Godhead." While narrating such descriptions, Īśāna Ṭhākura slowly moved towards Vāmana Paukherā in great happiness.

The following is a passage from *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*:

Nityānanda Prabhu along with Śrī Jīva and Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura arrived in Madhyadvīpa early one morning. Nityānanda Prabhu said, "This is the Mājidā village. At this place the seven *ṛṣis* were resting and worshiping Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. In Satya-yuga the Sapta-ṛṣis went to meet their father, Lord Brahmā. They saw that Brahmā was glorifying the holy name of Gaurāṅga and they asked how they could attain the eternal wealth of *gaura-premā*. Lord Brahmā was very pleased to be asked this question from his sons and he told them, 'All of you go to Navadvīpa and chant the glories of Lord Gaurāṅga. Thus you will develop this love very easily. By the mercy of the *dhāma* one gets *sādhu-saṅga*. When one performs one's *bhajana* in the association of a *sādhu* then one develops *kṛṣṇa-premā*. One who develops attachment to Navadvīpa-dhāma gets the chance to live in Vraja-dhāma. The *sādhu*'s only desire is to reside in the transcendental abode and chant the holy name of Gaurahari.' The Sapta-ṛṣis, after receiving these instructions from their father, came to this place. They started to dance, loudly chanting the holy name and glories of Lord Hari and begging for *gaura-premā*. They said, 'Oh Gaurahari! Kindly give us Your *darśana* once. We have not been following true *dharma* and thus we are great offenders. Finally we have understood that *bhakti* alone is the essence of everything.' Thus the Sapta-ṛṣis went through the austerity of engaging themselves in the worship of Gaurahari with steady devotion. They stopped their eating and sleeping and constantly chanted the holy name of Gaura. After some time, at midday, the most merciful Lord Gaurāṅga gave His *darśana* to the *ṛṣis*. Lord Gaurāṅga appeared along with the Pañca-tattva as effulgent as hundreds of suns and attracting the minds of all *yogīs*. He appeared very beautiful in His golden form, wearing a garland of *mallikā* flowers. The ornaments on His body increased His beauty as did the drop of sandalwood pulp on His forehead. His cloth was folded thrice and He wore a beautiful brahminical thread. When the Sapta-ṛṣis saw that most beautiful form of Gaurāṅga, they became overwhelmed and approached the Lord. They said, 'We take shelter at Your lotus feet, kindly give us devotion



Pañca-tattva

unto You.' Lord Gaurahari being very merciful upon them and hearing their prayers said, 'Dear *ṛṣis*! Please listen. Give up the desire for *jñāna* and *karma*. These are simply bondage. It is better to discuss the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa. Very soon in the city of Nadia during My manifested pastimes, all of you will witness the *nāma-saṅkīrtana-līlā*.

You must follow My instruction and keep this subject matter hidden for now. Do not mention this to anyone.

All of you go to Kumāra-haṭṭa and perform *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* there.' Saying this Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu disappeared and the Sapta-ṛṣis went to Kumāra-haṭṭa. The seven *ṭilās* (hillocks) where the *ṛṣis* were sitting are still visible and they match the formation of the Sapta-ṛṣi constellation in the night sky. By residing here one will attain Gaurahari even without practicing the *yamas* and *niyamas* (rules and regulations)."

NAIMIṢĀRAṆYA

... saptarṣi-maṇḍape hariḥ
nanarta naimiṣe tīrthe
sāvadhūtaḥ sa-pārṣadaḥ

"Lord Gaurahari then went to Naimiṣa-tīrtha. In Saptarṣi-maṇḍapa He danced with His associates and with Nityānanda Avadhūta."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, *Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.40)

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Naimiṣāraṇya as follows:
"There on the bank of the river Gomatī is the Naimiṣa forest, where the assembled *ṛṣis* are listening to recitations of the *Gaura-bhāgavata*. In order to hear these narratives about Lord Gaura, Śiva and the other demigods quickly mount Brahmā's swan-carrier and make haste to come.
When will I wander and wander throughout that forest and behold the wonderful vision of this assembly of sages hearing the *Gaura Purāṇa* by the bank of the Gomatī river? On the day of Ekādaśī during the most auspicious month of Kārtika, I will listen to those stories of *caitanya-kathā*.
When will the audience of *ṛṣis* headed by Śaunaka show me their mercy by grasping both my hands and putting the dust of their feet upon my head? I

will exclaim, 'O residents of Navadvīpa, let us attentively drink the nectar of *śrī-gaurāṅga-kathā* in this forest!'" (*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

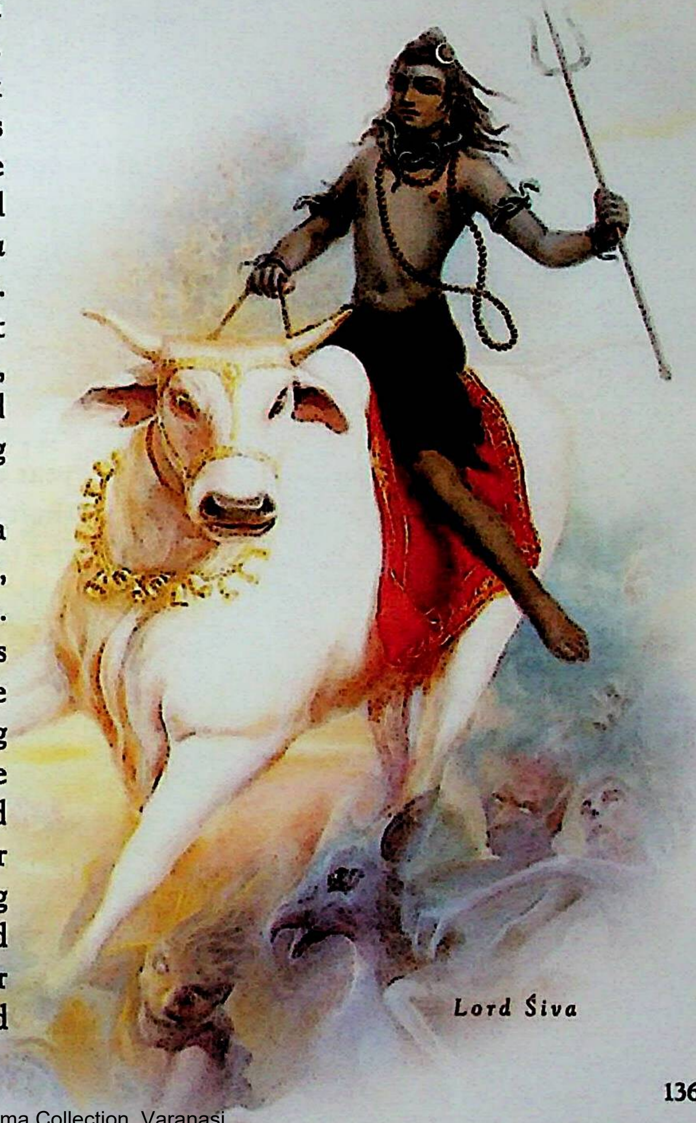
LORD ŚIVA VISITS NAIMIṢĀRAṆYA TO HEAR THE GAURA-BHĀGAVATA

Lord Nityānanda narrated this story to Śrī Jīva in the *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*:

Towards the south of Madhyadvīpa there is a river called the Gomatī. Naimiṣāraṇya is situated on the bank of this river. During ancient times when Kali became powerful, all the *ṛṣis* headed by Śaunaka Ṛṣi gathered here to hear the *Gaura-bhāgavata* from the lotus mouth of Sūta Gosvāmī. Whoever recites the *Purāṇas*, sitting at this place during the month of Kārtika, will become free from all suffering and easily achieve Vraja-dhāma by engaging in the service of Gaurāṅga.

Once, while the glories of Gaurāṅga were being spoken here in Naimiṣāraṇya, Lord Śiva desired to come and listen. He was traveling from Kailāsa to this place, riding on his bull carrier. But he understood that he was not travelling fast enough to arrive on time to hear the *gaura-kathā*. He therefore requested the use of Lord Brahmā's swan carrier so that he could travel faster. Riding on the swan very swiftly, he managed to reach Naimiṣāraṇya in time to hear the most wonderful *gaura-kathā*. Lord Śiva heard the glories of Lord Gaurāṅga and His associates from the *Purāṇas*. All the followers of Lord Śiva, the inhabitants of Kāśī, were chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga and dancing, surrounding Lord Pañcānana (the five-faced Lord Śiva), throwing flowers in great ecstasy.

When Śrī Jīva heard this description from Nityānanda Prabhu he was in such ecstasy relishing the glories of the *dhāma* that he could not control himself and started rolling on the ground.



Lord Śiva

That day all the devotees along with Lord Nityānanda stayed at Naimiṣāraṇya. The following morning all of them set off to take *darśana* of Śrī Puṣkara.

DIRECTIONS: Take the first road on the left just past the Haṁsa-vāhana temple. From that road, take the first road on the left. This is a dirt road that will keep getting smaller. Continue for approximately a kilometer going through mud-hut villages and mango groves. After the mango groves, you will need to walk as a car or rickshaw will not be able to continue.

HAṀSA-VĀHANA ŚIVA TEMPLE

At Haṁsa-vāhana there is a small temple dedicated to Lord Śiva. The deity used to be kept in the Gomatī River for most of the year and only came to the temple three days a year, around the *pūrṇimā* (full moon) day in the month of Caitra (March-April). The rest of the time Lord Śiva was kept underwater in the Gomatī River to keep him from getting too hot.

Last year the deity of Haṁsa-vāhana was stolen from the Gomatī by a group of local Muslim people who wanted to make money by selling him. This deity was rescued in a very miraculous way and since then has been worshiped in the Haṁsa-vāhana temple throughout the year as it is too dangerous to leave him in the river.

The name Haṁsa-vāhana refers to Lord Śiva who traveled with Lord Brahmā's swan carrier. *Haṁsa* means "swan" and *vāhana* means "one who is carried by". Approximately 50,000 people come every year for this festival. Previously, before the theft of the deity, while the Śiva-liṅga was in the temple for the three days of the festival, water was constantly poured on him to keep him from becoming too hot. The *liṅga* becomes hot because of Lord Śiva's intense desire to see Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

This festival takes place about three weeks after the Gaura-pūrṇimā festival. For the last few years the *pūjārīs* of Haṁsa-vāhana have brought the deity to ISKCON Māyāpur so that devotees from different parts of the world can take *darśana* and offer an elaborate *abhiṣeka* to the deity.

HAṀSA-VĀHANA ŚIVA TEMPLE

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES: Previously three days each year at the time of full moon in the month of Caitra (March-April), usually two to three weeks after Gaura-pūrṇimā.

At present one can take *darśana* at any time of the day.

DIRECTIONS FROM BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA'S HOUSE: Continue down the main road a short distance and take the first road on the right. You will pass a Gauḍīya Maṭha temple on the right side of this road. (This temple has a very nice diorama display of the pastimes of Lord Caitanya that is worth a visit.) Take the first left and then the first right. Continue down this road for about one and a half kilometers. On the left you will see a small hut painted yellow with a straw roof. This is the temple. It is in an open courtyard and there is a large tree on the right of the road.

PRESIDING DEITY: Lord Śiva riding on Lord Brahmā's swan carrier.

BRĀHMAṆA PUṢKARA

tato gatvā puṣkarākhyaṁ
tīrthaṁ vipra-niṣevitam
brahmāvartaṁ kurukṣetraṁ
plāvayām āsa kīrtanaiḥ

"The Lord went to Puṣkara-tīrtha which is worshiped by many *brāhmaṇas* and flooded Brahmāvarta Kurukṣetra with *kīrtana*."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.41)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes this holy place in *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"South of Naimiṣāraṇya lies Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara. This area is the same as the holy place named Śrī Puṣkara-tīrtha, and it was visited by the best of the *brāhmaṇas* named Divadāsa. Worshiping the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga at that place, *vipra* Divadāsa was consoled upon beholding a vision of the Lord's beautiful golden form."

DIVADĀSA RECEIVED DARŚANA OF PUṢKARA-TĪRTHA

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*)

Early one morning Lord Nityānanda and Śrī Jīva started their *dhāma-parikramā*. Lord Nityananda said, "Oh, Jīva! Just behold this beautiful village. Now people call this place Brāhmaṇapura but according to scripture, this place is known as Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara. The secret glories of this place are very confidential.

During Satya-yuga there was a *brāhmaṇa* called Divadāsa. He left his house and started traveling to take *darśana* of all the holy places but he was particularly interested in seeing Puṣkara-tīrtha in western India. Before reaching Puṣkara-tīrtha, his travels took him to Navadvīpa-dhāma. While he was in Navadvīpa, he had a dream in which someone instructed him to stay in Navadvīpa. He was told that by staying in Navadvīpa he would gain great eternal wealth. According to that instruction Divadāsa built a *kuṭīra* at this place and lived here until his old age. He became so old that he was not able to walk around anymore. During this time he again developed a great desire to go and have *darśana* of Puṣkara-tīrtha, but was now unable to walk. He felt very sad and started to cry saying, 'I will not get the chance to have *darśana* of Puṣkara-tīrtha in this life.' By seeing his situation *tīrtha-rāja* (the king of the holy places) Puṣkara became merciful upon him and appeared in the form of a *brāhmaṇa* to give *darśana* to Divadāsa. Puṣkara-tīrtha in his *brāhmaṇa* form told Divadāsa, 'Oh *brāhmaṇa*, please do not cry. Just see this beautiful pond in front of you. By taking bath once in this pond you will have *darśana* of Puṣkara-tīrtha.' Following the instruction of the *brāhmaṇa*, Divadāsa went to take bath in that pond. As soon as he took bath he received transcendental vision and saw Puṣkara-tīrtha in front of him.

Divadāsa started weeping and told Puṣkara-tīrtha, 'You have taken so much trouble to come here and give me *darśana*.' Puṣkara-tīrtha replied, 'Oh most fortunate *brāhmaṇa*! Please listen. I have not come from very far to give you *darśana*. Rather I have been residing here eternally in this Navadvīpa-dhāma. This Navadvīpa is filled with the holy *tīrthas*. All the *tīrthas* are residing here and serving the *dhāma*.

> *By my expansion I have manifested another form in western India. Whatever result one achieves by taking bath a hundred times in that tīrtha, he will also attain from taking bath here once.*

Therefore anyone who develops a desire to go to other *tīrthas*, leaving Navadvīpa-dhāma, must be a great fool and a rogue. By traveling to all the *tīrthas*, one receives the blessing of residence in Navadvīpa-dhāma. Just see this high land which is non-different from Kurukṣetra Brahmāvarta. Two rivers and Dṛṣadvatī flow on either side of this place and increase its beauty by spreading piety.'

Puṣkara-tīrtha continued, 'Dear *vipra*! I would like to tell you something very confidential. Soon great happiness will manifest here. In Māyāpur in the house of Śacī-devī, Lord Gaurasundara will appear and distribute love of Godhead to everyone abundantly. At this place the Lord will dance along with many devotees performing great *saṅkīrtana*. He will perform *kīrtana* gathering the devotees of all His previous incarnations. He will make the whole universe float in the flood of *premā*. Except for the fallacious logicians, everyone will receive this supreme love of God. Oh Divadāsa! Whoever resides in this *dhāma* with great sincerity will achieve the lotus feet of Gaurahari. If mischievous persons engage in *śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhajana* for millions of years they will still not develop a taste for the holy name. But the mischievous mentality of someone who worships Gaurāṅga will soon be removed and he will quickly attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja-dhāma. He will achieve his *siddha-deha* under the shelter of the *sakhīs* and he will be engaged in *yugala-sevā* inside the *kuñja*. Oh *vipra*! Stay here and perform *gaurāṅga-bhajana*. You will attain the *darśana* of Śrī Gaurāṅga along with all His associates.' Saying this *tīrtha-rāja* Puṣkara left.

The *brāhmaṇa* heard a mystical voice saying, 'Oh *vipra*, you will appear during the manifested pastime of Lord Gaurāṅga and swim in the ocean of *gaura-kīrtana-premā*.'"

Lord Nityānanda continued, "Upon hearing this voice, Divadāsa felt pacified and started his *bhajana* on the bank of this *kuṇḍa*."

PUṢKARA-TĪRTHA
PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: Return to the main road by the Haṁsa-vāhana temple. Turn left and continue for less than one kilometer. On the left you will see a large lake surrounded by a beautiful forest. Walk down the path to the lakeside. This is the place.

UCCAHAṬṬA (HAṬṬAḌĀṄGĀ)

Further south is Uccahaṭṭa, non-different from Kurukṣetra of Brahmāvarta, which is a place of pilgrimage for the three worlds. Here all the demigods reside, continuously performing *gaura-saṅkīrtana*. Sometimes the present-day residents of this area can hear that music.

A description of this holy place from *Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*:

After explaining the glories of Puṣkara-tīrtha to Śrī Jīva, Lord Nityānanda along with His associates entered Uccahaṭṭa in Kurukṣetra. Lord Nityānanda said, "All the demigods along with all the *tīrthas* have come to this Kurukṣetra. All the *tīrthas* from Brahmāvarta and Kurukṣetra stay here. Everyone, including Pṛthūdaka, resides here and they easily engage in the service of Navadvīpa-dhāma. Whatever benefit one derives by residing in Kurukṣetra for one hundred years, can be achieved just by spending one night at this place." Nityānanda Prabhu said, "The demigods used to gather here to enjoy *gaura-kathā*, opening the market (*haṭṭa*) of the holy name here. Therefore this place is known as Haṭṭaḍāṅgā. Whoever takes *darśana* of this place achieves unlimited love. Dear Jīva! This is the border of Nadia. Let us now go to the other side of the Bhāgīrathī."

The following is a passage from the *Bhakti-ratnākara*:

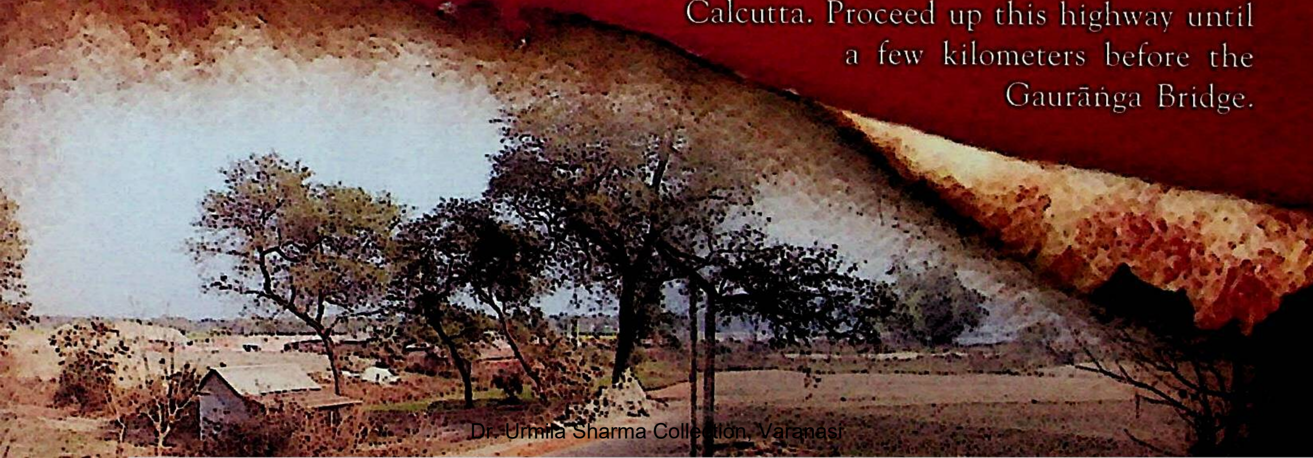
Īśāna Ṭhākura, standing near the Haṭṭaḍāṅgā village, told Śrīnivāsa, "Śrīnivāsa! This place is called Haṭṭaḍāṅgā.

Previously it was known as Uccahaṭṭa. All the demigods including Indra were staying here, absorbed in discussing the pastimes and associates of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. Some said, 'This Kali-yuga is blessed because Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu will appear, along with Lord Nityānanda and Advaitācārya.' Someone else said, 'Mahāprabhu has unlimited associates. Who can count them? All His associates are oceans of mercy. They are friends of the most fallen wretched people.' Another of the demigods said, 'Mahāprabhu, along with His associates, will be mad with *nāma-saṅkīrtana* and will make the whole world mad. The river of happiness will flow in this Nadia. Very easily all the sins of all the living entities will be removed.' Another said, 'There will be unlimited auspiciousness. Only the most fortunate people will see those wonderful pastimes. If all of us could take birth in Nadia then our great sadness would be removed.' Some said, 'Of course all of us will take birth here. We will see the pastimes of the Lord to our heart's content. All the devotees of Navadvīpa will take us with them and engage us in the service of Śrī Gauracandra.' Speaking in this way, the demigods opened a marketplace (*haṭṭa*) there. At this raised (*ucca*) place they performed *saṅkīrtana* loudly (*ucca-saṅkīrtana*). All of them with great eagerness, raising their hands, prayed, 'O Lord! Do not delay Your descent.' Saying this the demigods started to dance very joyfully in different postures while chanting the holy name of the Lord. Therefore this place is called Uccahaṭṭa."

Uccahaṭṭa (Kurukṣetra)

Practical Guide

Directions: when coming from ISKCON: Go down Bhaktisiddhānta Road to the end and turn right onto the main road to Calcutta. After the Krishnanagar turnoff, you will go under a railway overbridge and proceed into a small town where there is an intersection of roads. Take the road going straight ahead (Highway No. 8, Navadvipa-Krishnanagar highway). Do not take the road to the left as it goes to Calcutta. Proceed up this highway until a few kilometers before the Gaurāṅga Bridge.



PAÑCAVEṆĪ (MAHĀ-PRAYĀGA)

tato mahā-prayāgākhyaṁ
pañca-veṇī-samanvitam
tīrthaṁ śrī-jāhnavīṁ tīrtvā
koladvīpaṁ jagāma ha

"The Lord visited the holy place called Mahā-Prayāga and the Pañcaveṇī-tīrtha. He then crossed Śrī Gaṅgā-devī and entered Koladvīpa."

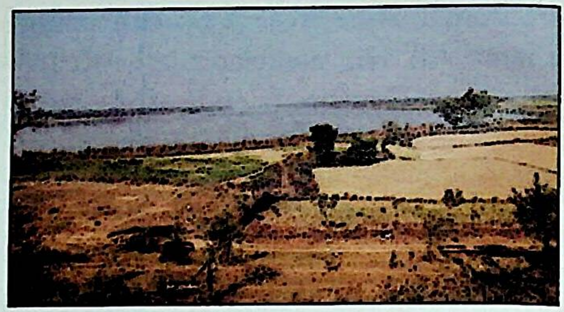
(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.42)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes this holy place in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"Near Ucchaṭṭa is the place known as Pañcaveṇī (five streams). It is considered a holy pilgrimage spot by the demigods, who come here on vacation. At this place the three streams of the River Gaṅgā (Bhāgīrathī, Mandākinī and Alakanandā) along with the Yamunā and Sarasvatī rivers all join together, desiring to perform service to Lord Gaura.

Here Gaurahari and His associates take bath, thereby purifying the *tīrtha* from all the sins left by the people of Kali-yuga. Vedavyāsa and the assembly of *ṛṣis* recognize that in all the fourteen worlds there is no place which could compare with Pañcaveṇī.

When will I bathe in the waters of the Pañcaveṇī and thereby remember the lotus feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga? Filling the palms of my hands with the very water that has washed the feet of Gaura and drinking it, becoming madly intoxicated by topics about Lord Gaura, when will I be so blessed?" (*Navadvīpa-bhava-taraṅga*)



After leaving Madhyadvīpa one has to cross the River Gaṅgā to enter the island of Koladvīpa. Lord Nityānanda explained the glories of the Gaṅgā at this place, known as Pañcaveṇī. At this place five rivers have joined together: Mandākinī, Alakanandā, Bhāgīrathī, Sarasvatī and Yamunā. The Sarasvatī flows here in her hidden form. The Bhogavatī is flowing along with the Yamunā on its western side. Mānasa-gaṅgā is also flowing here with great speed. The *ṛṣis* call this place Mahā-Prayāga and they perform millions of fire sacrifices here along with Lord Brahmā. This holy spot is also known as Brahma-satra. Anyone who takes bath here will never take birth again in this material world. Who can describe the glories of this holy place? No other *tīrtha* can be compared to the dry river bed at Mahā-Prayāga.

PAÑCAVEṆĪ (MAHĀ-PRAYĀGA)

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: when coming from Brāhmaṇa Puṣkara and Uccahaṭṭa: Continue down the Navadvipa-Krishnanagar highway until just before the Gaurāṅga Bridge.

Śrī Koladvīpa

This island represents **pāda-sevanam**-serving the lotus feet.

Places to visit on this island are the Dhāmeśvara temple, Porama Tala, Śrī Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's *samādhi* and *bhajana-kuṭīra*, as well as Śrī Gaura-Gadādhara temple at Campahaṭṭi.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has described Koladvīpa in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:
"After crossing the Pañcaveṇī one enters Koladvīpa which is very beautiful to behold. At this place the Lord appeared to His devotee in the form of a boar, therefore it is described in the scriptures as Varāha-kṣetra. This *tīrtha* is rarely attained even by the *devas* and is transcendental to this material nature. This place is famous as Kuliyā-pāhāḍa (mountain) in this world and is considered great among the places of Gaurāṅga's pastimes. After accepting the *sannyāsa* order of life, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya came here on the pretext of going to Vraja, when in reality His intention was to visit Nadia. (...) Those living entities who see Koladvīpa are blessed. This is the most blissful *dhāma* and location of the Bahulavana forest. Here Śacī-kumāra Gaurahari has danced in *kīrtana* for many hours. Oh, Koladvīpa! Kindly bless this most insignificant person and allow me to reside in Navadvīpa in the association of devotees. Allow me to enter into the pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga, who is my Lord life after life."

LORD NITYĀNANDA SPEAKS ABOUT THE SEQUENCE OF PARIKRAMĀ

One day during the afternoon, Lord Nityānanda reached Koladvīpa along with Śrī Jīva and others. While walking towards Kuliyā-pāhāḍa (hill), Lord Nityānanda told Śrī Jīva, "The route we are following, crossing the River Gaṅgā, is the proper sequence for *parikramā*. Once, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was engaged in *chauda-maṇḍala-*

tato mahā-prayāgākhyaṁ
pañca-veṇī-samanvitam
tīrthaṁ śrī-jāhnavīṁ tīrtvā
koladvīpaṁ jagāma ha

"The Lord passed through the Pañcaveṇī-tīrtha, also known as Mahā-Prayāga. He crossed Śrī Gaṅgā-devī and entered into Koladvīpa."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4. 42)

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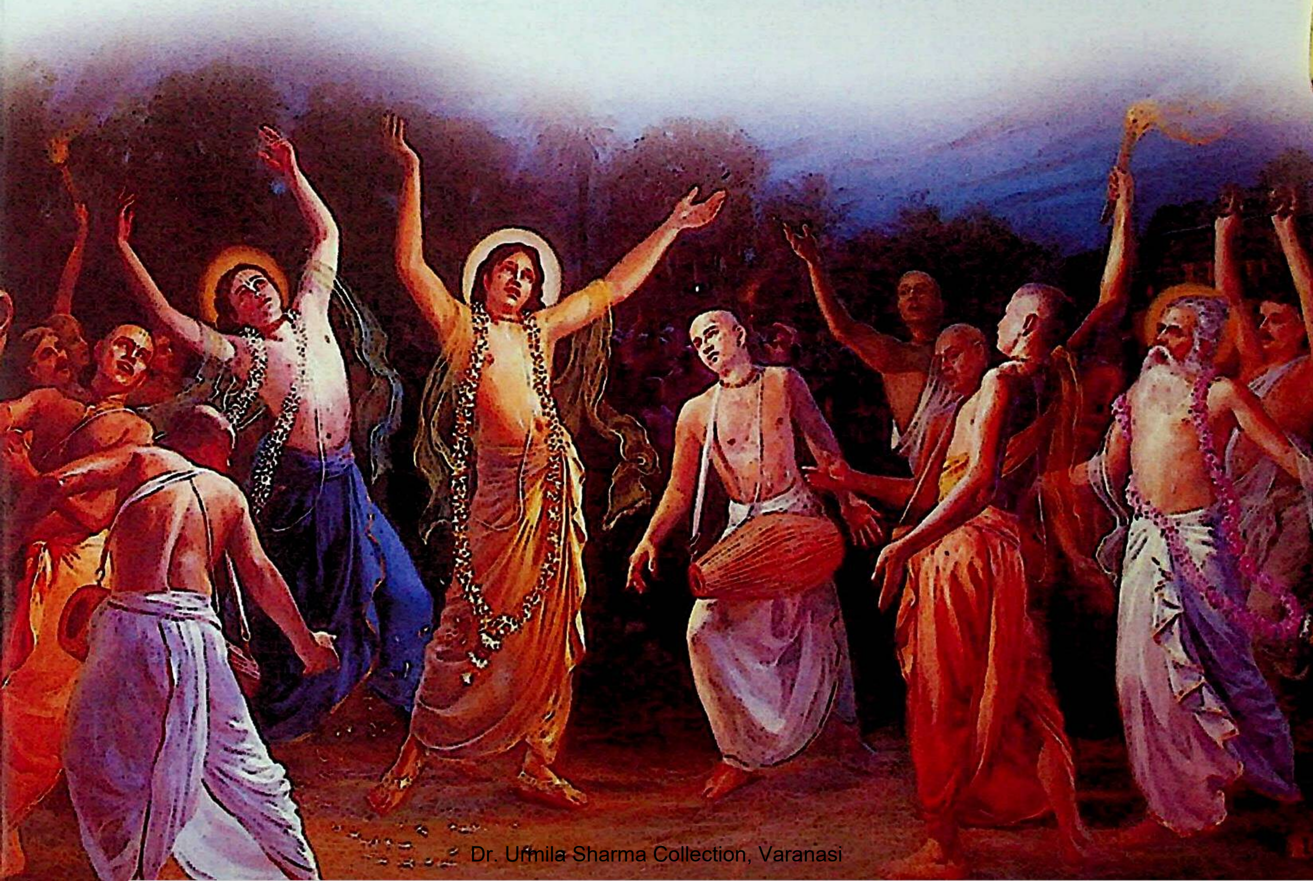
saṅkīrtana (chanting with fourteen simultaneous musical groups), in order to purify Chand Kazi. In the evening, Mahāprabhu left Māyāpur and went out along with His devotees. That night became Brahma-rātra (as long as the night of Brahmā). On that occasion Mahāprabhu was moving with the *saṅkīrtana* party in this same sequence.

After that, every Ekādaśī my Lord would go out on *saṅkīrtana*. Sometimes He would circumambulate Antardvīpa, taking the five *krośa* path and at other times He would perform *parikramā* over the eight *krośas*, according to His own desire. He would start *saṅkīrtana* from His house and go towards Bārākoṇā-ghāṭa. Then he would proceed towards Śrīdhara's house from where he would come to the end of Antardvīpa."



THE APPEARANCE OF LORD VARĀHADEVA IN NAVADVĪPA

On the western bank of the Gaṅgā there is some raised land, like a small mountain, known as Kuliyā-pāhāḍa. This mountain is no longer visible and has been described in scripture as Koladvīpa.

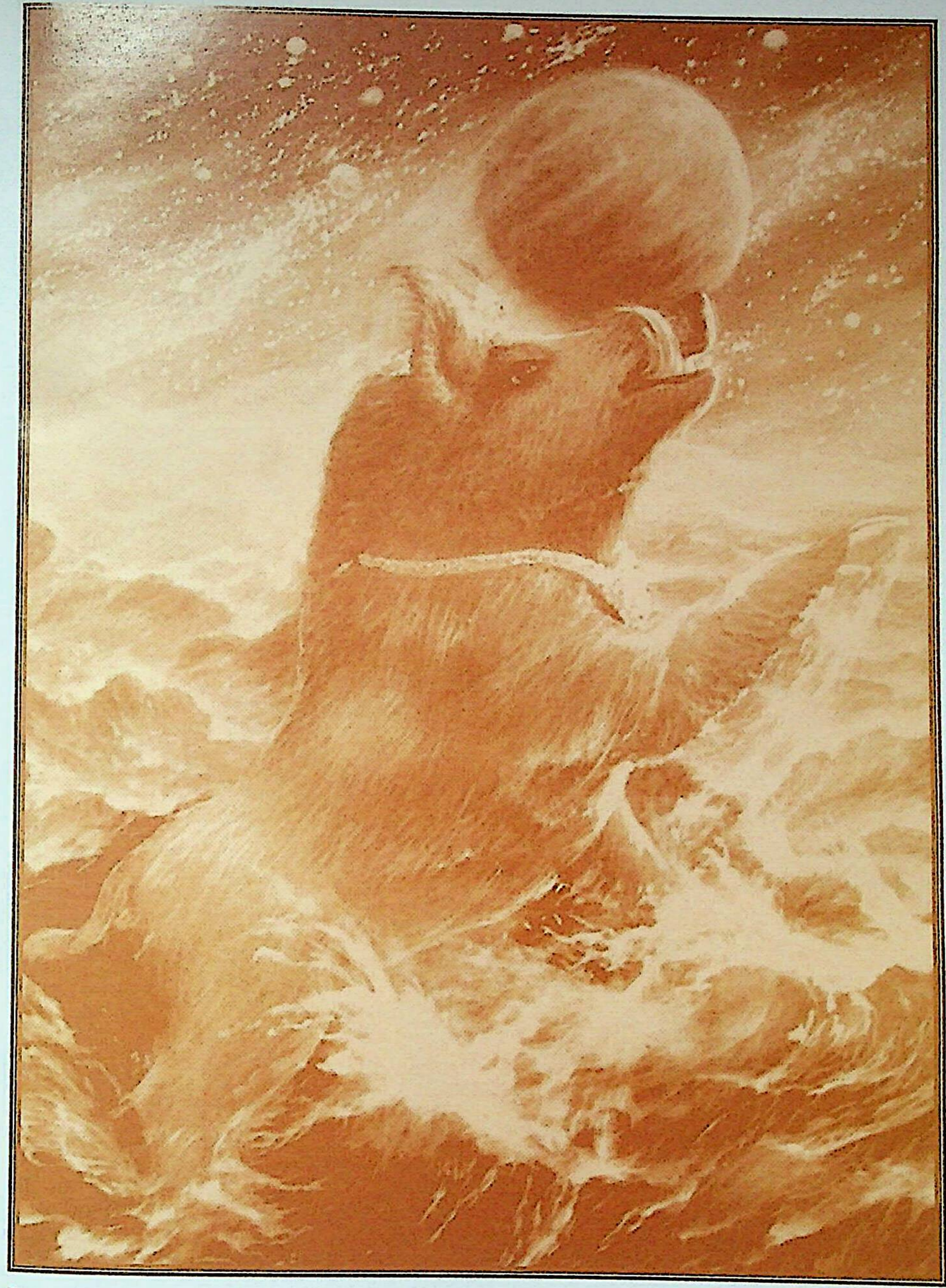
In Satya-yuga a *brāhmaṇa* named Vāsudeva was living here. He was a great devotee of Lord Varāhadeva and would worship the deity of Śrī Varāhadeva, sincerely offering his prayers. He would pray to the Lord, "Oh, my dear Lord! Please be merciful upon me and give me Your *darśana* so that my eyes may become purified and my life perfected." Speaking in this manner, the *brāhmaṇa* collapsed and rolled around on the ground in frustration. He thought, "My Lord is not giving me His *darśana*, therefore my life is useless."

After some days, Śrī Varāhadeva mercifully bestowed His *darśana* to Vāsudeva Vipra in the form of a *kola* (boar). His body was decorated with many varieties of jewellery. The Lord's lotus feet, neck, nose, face, and eyes were especially attractive and His body was as tall as a mountain. When Vāsudeva Vipra saw this wondrous form of the Lord he felt blessed. He offered obeisances to the Lord, falling at His feet, and began crying with great ecstasy while rolling on the ground. Upon seeing the great devotion of Vāsudeva Vipra the Lord said in a sweet voice, "Oh, Vāsudeva! You are My great devotee and have pleased Me by your fixed devotion. Please listen to Me. When Kali-yuga comes, My manifested pastimes will take place in this Navadvīpa. There is no place in the three worlds equal to Navadvīpa-dhāma. This is My dearest *dhāma* and has been kept very secret. The scriptures describe that all the holy places, including Brahmāvarta, exist here. This most pious land is where I appeared from the fire sacrifice of Lord Brahmā and killed the demon Hiraṇyākṣa by piercing him with My teeth.

> Whoever resides in Navadvipa will attain the results of residing in all other tirthas.

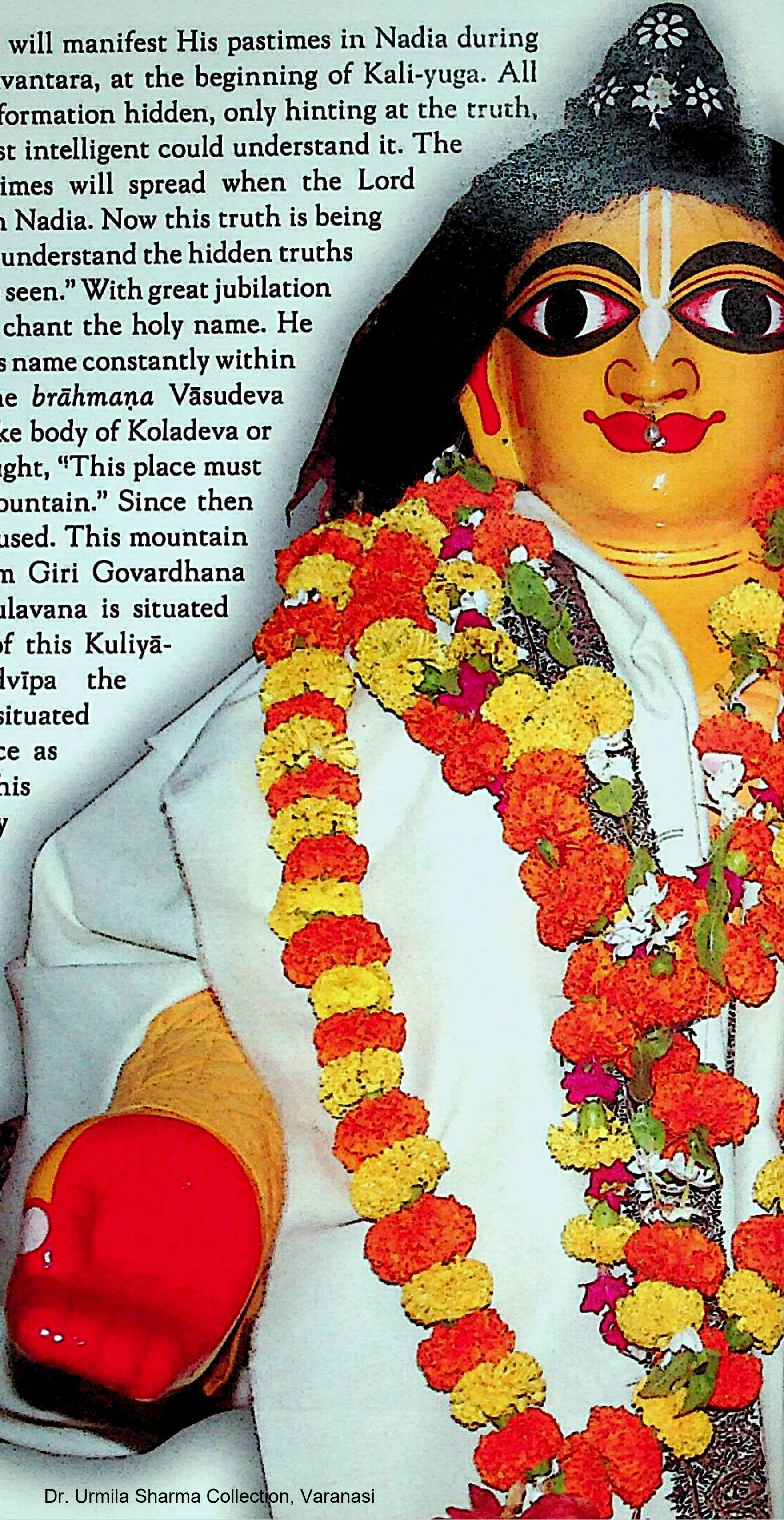
You are very fortunate to serve Me in this Navadvīpa-dhāma. You will again take birth here during My manifested pastimes. You will see the most beautiful form of Gaurāṅga and His great *saṅkīrtana* pastimes." Having spoken these words, Śrī Varāhadeva vanished.

After hearing this *daiva-vāṇī*, the *vipra* tried to understand the subject. By analyzing all the scriptures the greatly learned Vāsudeva understood that



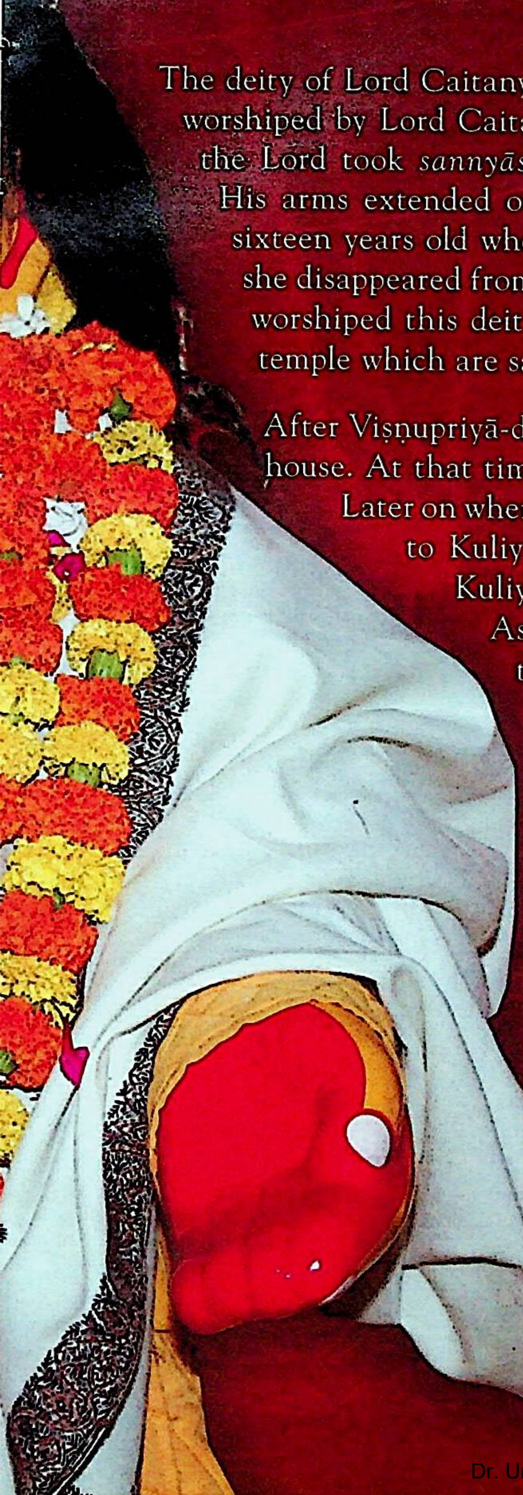
LORD VARĀHADEVA

"Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga will manifest His pastimes in Nadia during the Vaivasvata-manvantara, at the beginning of Kali-yuga. All the *ṛṣis* kept this information hidden, only hinting at the truth, so that only the most intelligent could understand it. The glory of these pastimes will spread when the Lord manifests Himself in Nadia. Now this truth is being kept secret but I can understand the hidden truths by the glimpse I have seen." With great jubilation the *vipra* started to chant the holy name. He was chanting Gaura's name constantly within his mind. When the *brāhmaṇa* Vāsudeva saw the mountain-like body of Koladeva or Varāhadeva, he thought, "This place must be the Koladvīpa mountain." Since then this name has been used. This mountain is non-different from Giri Govardhana in Vṛndāvana. Bahulavana is situated towards the north of this Kuliyā-pāhāḍa. In Navadvīpa the twelve forests are not situated in the same sequence as in Vṛndāvana. This discrepancy can only be due to the desire of the Lord and He alone knows the reason.



DHĀMEŚVARA TEMPLE

(Mahāprabhu Bāri)



The deity of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu in this temple is said to have been worshiped by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's wife, Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā, after the Lord took *sannyāsa*. This deity of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu has His arms extended out lovingly towards His devotees. Viṣṇupriyā was sixteen years old when Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu took *sannyāsa* and she disappeared from this material world at the age of ninety-six, so she worshiped this deity for eighty years. Wooden shoes are kept in this temple which are said to have been worn by Lord Caitanya.

After Viṣṇupriyā-devī's disappearance her cousin took the deity to his house. At that time he was living on the eastern side of the Gaṅgā. Later on when his house was washed away by the Gaṅgā he moved to Kuliyā-grāma on the western side of the Gaṅgā. This Kuliyā-grāma is known today as the town of Navadvīpa. As Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu was the son-in-law of this family, they still to this day worship the deity as their son-in-law.

DARŚANA TIMES: 5.00 a.m.-12.00 and 1.00-9.00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS FROM THE MARKET BANYAN TREE: Go down the Porama Tala market road (going towards the *ghāṭa*) and take the second left. There is a jewellery shop on the corner. It is on the right side of the road after going past some other temples. Above the entrance to this temple is a sign which reads "Dhāmeśvara Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu". This temple is approximately a five-minute walk away from Porama Tala.

PRESIDING DEITY: Dhāmeśvara Mahāprabhu

PRAUḌHĀ MĀYĀ AND VṚDDHA (KṢETRA-PĀLA) ŚIVA

Vṛddha Śiva and his consort Prauḍhā Māyā are the eternal protectors of the holy dhāma. Prauḍhā Māyā was originally worshiped on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā. When a good part of Māyāpur was covered by the Gaṅgā, some people crossed the Gaṅgā and came to Kuliyā (on the western side) and began to worship Prauḍhā Māyā at this place. Therefore it became known as Prauḍhāmā-talā (Porama Tala).

Prauḍhā Māyā is Yoga-māyā. She covers the holy dhāma and does not allow non-devotees to enter. Even though certain people's bodies are allowed to arrive in the dhāma, they are unable to understand the glories of the dhāma. When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in Vraja, Yoga-māyā also appeared with Him. In Vraja she is known as Paurṇamāsī and in Navadvīpa she is Prauḍhā Māyā. She also resides in Sīmantadvīpa in another form, as Pārvatī.

Previously Prauḍhā Māyā and Vṛddha Śiva were worshiped in Māyāpur between the ISKCON temple and Yoga-pīṭha. But because of the shifting of the Gaṅgā, the residents of Kuliyā (present-day Navadvīpa town) moved them to the other side of the Gaṅgā.

PRAUḌHĀ MĀYĀ and VṚDDHA (KṢETRA-PĀLA) ŚIVA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DARŚANA TIMES:
10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

DIRECTIONS:
Go to Hulor Ghat and take a boat across to Navadvīpa. There, after passing through the tollgate, you can either take a rickshaw to Porama Tala or walk about five minutes until you reach a T-junction. Turn left and follow the road as it makes a right turn. Turn left again at the end of this road and then take the first road on the right hand side. This road will take you to Porama Tala market which is marked by a huge banyan tree. The temple is inside the banyan tree, which is the center of the market.

PRESIDING DEITY:
Vṛddha Śiva, the eternal protector of Navadvīpa-dhāma, and Prauḍhā Māyā who reveals the dhāma to the devotees.

Urmila Sharma Co[illegible]nasi

ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHA DĀSA BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRĀJA'S SAMĀDHI AND BHAJANA-KUṬĪRA

Before coming to Navadvīpa, Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī performed his bhajana at Sūrya-kuṇḍa in Vraja. In the latter part of his life he came to Navadvīpa-dhāma. At this time he was considered by the Vaiṣṇavas, including Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, to be the most advanced rasika Vaiṣṇava in Vraja-maṇḍala, Gaura-maṇḍala and Jagannātha Purī. He was therefore known as Vaiṣṇava- sārvabhauma, or the chief of the Vaiṣṇavas.

At the request of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in 1893, he confirmed the discovery of the birthplace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at Yoga-pīṭha in Śrīdhāma Māyāpur. At that time he was too old to walk and had to be carried in a basket. Upon reaching Lord Caitanya's appearance place he miraculously jumped fifteen feet into the air, and began chanting the names of Kṛṣṇa, dancing wildly.

ŚRĪ JAGANNĀTHA DĀSA BĀBĀJĪ MAHĀRĀJA'S SAMĀDHI *and* BHAJANA-KUṬĪRA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

পুরাতন ভজন
"PURATAN BHAJA
কৃষ্ণচৈতন্য প্রভু নিত্যানন্দ শ্রীঅদ্বৈত গদাধর শ্রীবাসাদি গৌ

DARŚANA TIMES: 5.30-10.00 a.m. and 4.00-8.00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Go down the Porama Tala market road as if going to the ghāṭa. Take the first right and after a short distance the first left. Soon you will see a small path on the left side between the walls of some houses. Walk down this path. The entrance to the samādhi is just after a left turn.

PRESIDING DEITIES:
Nitāi-Gaurāṅga, Rādhā-Govinda and Giridhārī

SAMUDRAGARH

samudra-sena-rājye tu
gaṅgā-sāgara-saṅgame
kīrtayitvā hariṁ devi
campa-haṭṭaṁ jagāma ha

"O Devī! The Lord performed *hari-kīrtana* in the kingdom of Samudra Sena at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the ocean before proceeding to Campahaṭṭa."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 43)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes in *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga:*

"After traveling some distance from there (the house of Vidyā Vācaspati), I see Samudragarh which purifies whole world. Previously, at this place, during the battle of Bhīmasena and Samudra Sena, Dīnabandhu (the friend of the poor, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa) gave His *darśana* to His devotee Śrī Samudra Sena. Here the ocean takes shelter of the River Gaṅgā in order to witness the Navadvīpa pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga in great joy and ecstasy. All the demigods and demons see Śrī Gaṅgā-sāgara-tīrtha eternally manifest in Navadvīpa-dhāma."

KING SAMUDRA SENA RECEIVES DARŚANA OF LORD ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA

Samudragarh is non-different from Dvārakā-purī. Both Dvārakā-purī and Gaṅgā-sāgara exist here.

Many years ago there was a king, known as Samudra Sena, living here in Samudragarh. He was a great devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and did not know anything except the glories of Kṛṣṇa. Once, Śrī Bhīmasena, one of the five Pāṇḍavas, came here with his soldiers to conquer Vaṅga-bhūmi (Bengal). Bhīmasena was roaming the earth to become the Digvijayī (conqueror of all directions). According to the established system, he would travel to various kingdoms, collecting tax from the rulers who would thus submit themselves to the rule of the Pāṇḍavas. If anyone refused to pay the tax he had to fight with Bhīmasena. In order to conquer Vaṅga-bhūmi, Bhīmasena surrounded the country with his soldiers. King Samudra Sena was a great devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and had a strong desire to attain the Lord's *darśana*. He then devised a plan to take advantage of the presence of Bhīmasena to bring Kṛṣṇa to his kingdom. He did not submit to Bhīma by paying him the proper tax but rather chose to wage war.

The king thought, "When Bhīmasena

is in trouble during the battle, and calls for Lord Kṛṣṇa then the Lord, being the protector of His devotees, will come to rescue Bhīmasena and thus I will receive *darśana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa." With this plan in mind, Śrī Samudra Sena prepared his battalions to fight with Bhīma. The king started shooting arrows furiously, in meditation on Lord Kṛṣṇa. Feeling the force of the king's arrows, Bhīmasena became fearful and mentally prayed to Lord Kṛṣṇa,

"Oh my Lord, kindly protect Your servant from this danger by giving me the shelter of Your lotus feet. I can no longer endure this fight with Samudra Sena and at the same time I can not tolerate abandoning the battlefield.

O, merciful Lord! It is a great shame that the Pāṇḍavas, whose Lord is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, will be defeated." By hearing the pitiful prayers of Bhīma, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on the battlefield, visible only to Samudra Sena. The king saw the youthful form of the Lord, whose bodily color was like freshly formed clouds. A flower garland graced His neck, He wore a beautiful yellow *dhotī* and His entire body shone due to the magnificent array of jewellery He wore. When the king saw that most incredible form of the Lord, he immediately fainted, falling to the ground. When he regained his external senses he prayed to the Lord, "Oh, Kṛṣṇa! You are the Lord of the universe, deliverer of the fallen living entities. You have come here to bestow Your mercy upon me, understanding me as one of the most fallen. The entire universe is glorifying Your wonderful pastimes. By hearing Your glories I developed a great desire to have Your *darśana* and made a vow to bring You to this Navadvīpa-dhāma as it was not possible for me to leave Navadvīpa. O, most merciful Lord! In order to keep my vow, being merciful upon me, You have now appeared here in Your form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But I have another deeper, confidential desire. I wish to see Your Gaurāṅga form manifest in front of me." Immediately, the king could see the incomparably sweet pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He saw Śrī Kṛṣṇa along with His *sakhās*, enjoying His *go-cāraṇa* (grazing the cows) pastime during the afternoon in Śrī Kumudavana. After just one moment that pastime disappeared and he saw the most beautiful form of Gaurāṅga. He was filled with bliss, seeing the Lord along with His associates, chanting and dancing in *mahā- saṅkīrtana*. The Lord's transcendental form was the color of molten gold, giving ecstatic pleasure to the eyes. The king felt blessed to behold that form and offered many prayers at the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. After some time the scene disappeared from the vision of the king, who began weeping in separation. While all this was transpiring, neither Bhīmasena nor anyone else could perceive it.

Seeing the king crying, Bhīma thought that he must have become afraid of the battle. The Pāṇḍava then gained courage and began to show his prowess in the fight. The king, being pleased by the efforts of Bhīma, eventually submitted and offered to pay him the tax, leaving him to continue on his quest.

This is the place known as Samudragarh which is the boundary or outer limit of Navadvīpa-dhāma. Even Lord Brahmā does not know the glories of this place.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN SAMUDRA (THE OCEAN) AND GAṄGĀ-DEVĪ

The Gaṅgā merges with the ocean at Gaṅgā-sāgara. The ocean is known as Samudra and flows all the way up to Samudragarh to serve the lotus feet of the Lord, under the shelter of the Gaṅgā who is also known as Jāhnavī. Samudra said, "Jāhnavī! You are very fortunate to have Lord Gaurāṅga staying on your bank and bathing in your water." Jāhnavī replied, "Oh, Sindhu! Yes, I am indeed very fortunate to have the Lord here. But unfortunately my Lord will leave Navadvīpa after some time and go to reside on your shore."

The ocean then informed Gaṅgā, "O, Devī! Please listen to me. Śacī-nandana never leaves Navadvīpa.

Even if He goes to stay on my shore for some time, He eternally resides in Nadia in His un-manifested form.

Navadvīpa is the eternal abode of the Lord. The *Vedas* explain about the *prakaṭa* (manifested) and *aprakaṭa* (unmanifested) pastimes of the Lord. O, beautiful one! I will stay here under your shelter and serve Navadvīpa-dhāma and Lord Śrī Gaurahari." To this day the ocean known as Payonidhi (the milk ocean) remains in Navadvīpa and constantly meditates upon the eternal pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga.

This topic has also been described by Īśāna Ṭhākura in *Bhakti- ratnākara*: Īśāna Ṭhākura came to Samudragaḍi village, also known by some as

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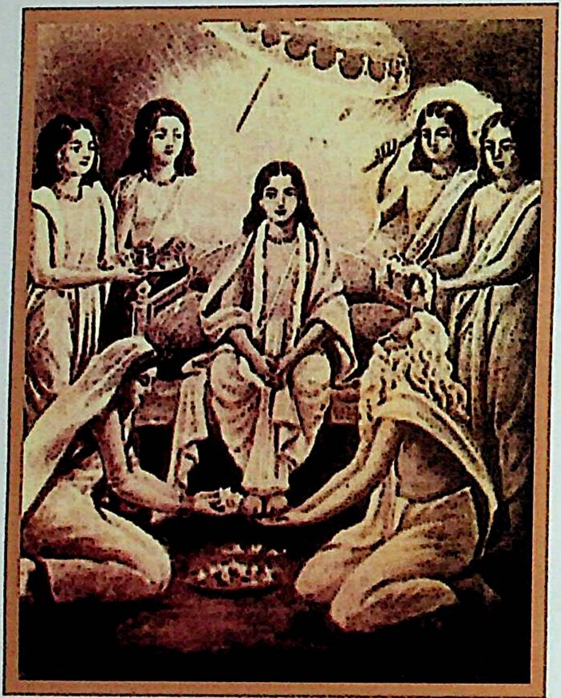
Samudra-gati. At this place the topic of the Gaṅgā and the ocean is very pleasing to hear. Samudra flows here taking shelter of the Gaṅgā.

One day Samudra said to Gaṅgā-devī, "There is no one as fortunate as you in this whole universe. Everyone says that *pūrna- brahma* Śrī Gaurāṅga will appear and manifest His pastimes in Nadia. Along with His associates He will always perform His pastimes on your banks, manifesting unlimited happiness. Just as the Lord enjoys water sports in the Yamunā of Vraja-maṇḍala, so Gaura Rāya will play here in your waters." Hearing this Gaṅgā-devī revealed her heart to Samudra with these sweet words, "I do not know to whom I will tell my suffering. The Lord will give me happiness in the beginning but later He will give me so much distress. He will leave Nadia, take *sannyāsa* and go to live on your shore. He will manifest the most amazing pastimes there and thus will eternally increase your happiness. Everyone will sing your glories. Instead of speaking this truth, you are unnecessarily joking with me." Samudra replied, "What you have said is correct, the Lord will go to Purī and live there on my shore, but He will go there after taking *sannyāsa* wearing the simple dress of the renounced order. My heart will break to see Him dressed in this way. Just by remembering the Lord in that cloth I feel uncomfortable within my heart. Therefore I have taken shelter of you. You will show me that most attractive form of Gauracandra in this city of Nadia. I will never forget seeing the curling hair of the Lord. As the Lord is wonderful to behold, so too are His dear associates. I will see all of them by your mercy."

Gaṅgā-devī and Samudra discussed in this way while waiting for the advent of the Lord. Here Gaṅgā-devī and the ocean are always in ecstasy by meditating on Śrī Gauracandra. Both the Gaṅgā and Samudra were very eager and came to know that the time for the Lord to descend had arrived. At the time of the Lord's advent everything was very auspicious. On the pretext of a lunar eclipse everyone was chanting the holy name of Lord Hari. The land of Navadvīpa became very effulgent. The house of Jagannātha Miśra became very beautiful. All kinds of inauspiciousness were removed. Everyone was floating in an ocean of bliss. The *ṛṣis* were chanting different types of prayers. Brahmā and all the demigods were showering flowers. As soon as the Lord appeared as the son of Śacī-devī, the news spread all over the universe. When the Lord appeared, the ocean (Samudra) with great eagerness asked Gaṅgā-devī to show him the Lord's different pastimes, including His appearance *līlā*. By taking shelter of the River Gaṅgā, the ocean came to Navadvīpa every day and saw the pastimes of Śrī Gauracandra.

THE OCEAN RECEIVES DARŚANA OF LORD GAURĀṄGA

One day the ocean saw Śrī Gauracandra on the bank of the pristine Gaṅgā sitting on a throne under a tree, surrounded by His associates. Śrī Gaurahari was happily sitting on a transcendental *siṁhāsana*. His beauty defeated the pride of millions of Kandarpas. Neither gold nor *kuṅkuma* can be compared to His form. The entire universe forgets everything, seeing the beauty of His hair. His moon-like face destroys the pride of millions of moons. When He smiles, nectar flows from His lips. His posture is most attractive. His long eyes extend up to His ears, His hands reach to His knees, and He has a broad chest and strong thighs on either side of a beautiful deep navel. The soles of His lotus feet are red like the rising sun.



He was wearing white silk cloth with a red border. His whole body was anointed with Malaya sandalwood pulp and was decorated with different varieties of flowers. His dear associates were looking at Him in a wonderful way. As Gauracandra was beautiful, so too were His dear associates. On the Lord's right, Lord Nityānanda was sitting and on His left side Śrī Gadādhara was standing. In front of the Lord, Advaita and Śrīvāsa along with all the other associates were standing. All these devotees were very much overwhelmed by love and were gazing upon Śrī Gauracandra unblinkingly. The Lord's servants were engaged in various kinds of services for the Lord's pleasure. Seeing all this, Samudra became impatient in ecstasy and developed many desires within his mind. That Lord, who is sitting within everyone's heart, fulfilled all his desires. Samudra became overwhelmed with bliss seeing the Lord along with all His associates. He praised the River Gaṅgā again and again. By taking shelter of the Gaṅgā, Samudra came to Navadvīpa every day. Samudra flows (*gati*) with the current of the Gaṅgā. Therefore people called this place Samudra-gati. Now it is known as Samudragaḍi. Īśāna Ṭhākura said, "O, Śrīnivāsa! How can I describe to you the pastimes of Śrī Gaurāṅga in the houses of His devotees here, with only one mouth?"

CAMPAHAṬṬI

samudra-sena-rājye tu
gaṅgā-sāgara-saṅgame
kīrtayitvā hariṁ devi
campa-haṭṭaṁ jagāma ha

"O Devī! The Lord performed *hari-kīrtana* in the kingdom of Samudra Sena at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the ocean before proceeding to Campahaṭṭa."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 43)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has mentioned the following in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:
"Towards the north of Koladvīpa there is a place called Campahaṭṭa. In all of Navadvīpa-dhāma this place is the most beautiful. This Campahaṭṭa village is a great *tīrtha* and the most attractive location of the poet Jayadeva's worship of Gaura- śaśadhara. There, at the house of Vāṇīnātha, Śrī Śacī-nandana along with His associates performed *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. There was a great festival at the house of Vāṇīnātha, where Śrī Gaurāṅga showed His opulence of love. In Campahaṭṭa village there is a forest of *campaka* flowers, which the *gopī* Campakalatā comes here to pick. This forest in Navadvīpa is non-different from Khadiravana in Vraja where Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa take rest."

WHY IS THIS PLACE KNOWN AS CAMPAHAṬṬI?

During their Navadvīpa-dhāma Parikramā, Lord Nityānanda, along with the devotees including Śrī Jīva and Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, reached the village called Campahaṭṭi. There all of them took rest at the house of Dvija Vāṇīnātha, a great devotee of Lord Gaurāṅga. During the afternoon they went for a walk around the Campahaṭṭi village and Lord Nityānanda explained to Śrī Jīva about this place.

The Lord said, "O, son of Vallabha! Please listen to Me. Previously there was a *campaka* flower garden at this place. This place is part of Khadiravana and is very beautiful to behold. Every day Campakalatā *sakhī* would come here to collect *campaka* flowers and make garlands as an offering to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. As Kali-yuga progressed, the gardeners began plucking all the flowers and selling them to the villagers.

Thus a marketplace for campaka flowers was established.

At that time this place received the name Śrī Campakahaṭṭa and is now known as Campahaṭṭi among the people."

THE POET JAYADEVA IN CAMPAHAṬṬI

Once, Nadia was ruled by King Lakṣmaṇa Sena. At that time the great poet Jayadeva was living here as one of his citizens. The most sober Jayadeva was living in a cottage on the bank of Ballāl-dīghi with his wife Padmavatī. While residing there, Jayadeva composed the Sanskrit poem *Daśāvatāra-stotra*, which inevitably came to the attention of King Lakṣmaṇa Sena.

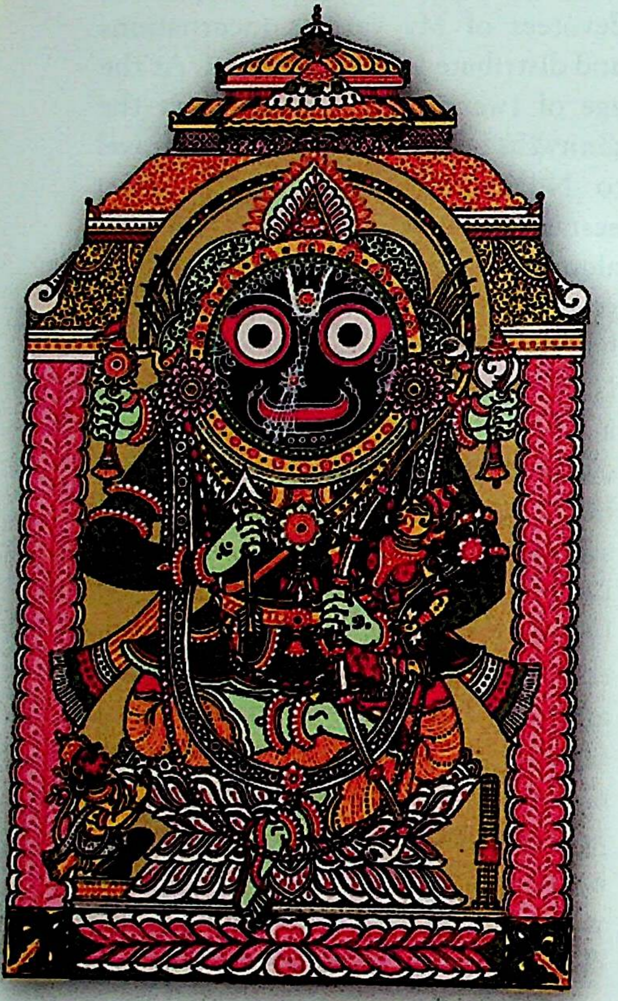
He was very happy to read the poem and asked who had composed such a wonderful piece.

Govardhana Ācārya informed the king that this Sanskrit poem or *stava* had been composed by the poet Jayadeva who lived in Navadvīpa. After discovering the residence of Jayadeva, the king came to his *kuṭīra* one night, disguised as a Vaiṣṇava. He offered his obeisance to Jayadeva and sat in one corner of his *kuṭīra*. Jayadeva recognized that he was the King of Nadia who had visited him, wearing a Vaiṣṇava dress out of his humility. The king immediately introduced himself and requested Jayadeva to visit his palace, but Jayadeva was a greatly renounced and detached person. He did not agree to visit the house of the materialistic king. Being a great devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Jayadeva said, "O King! It is never auspicious to associate with materialistic persons. I will leave your kingdom and go elsewhere. I will cross the Gaṅgā and go to Nīlācala-dhāma." The king replied, "O, my lord, kindly honor my request. Never leave Navadvīpa to go elsewhere. If you are merciful, then act in such a way that your word will be kept and my desire will also be fulfilled. There is a very beautiful place called Campahaṭṭa on the western bank of the Gaṅgā. Kindly stay there for one or two years by my humble request. I will not go there of my own accord. But I will go only when you desire it, so that I may take *darśana* of your lotus feet." The great poet Jayadeva agreed and said, "Even if you look like a materialistic person and this kingdom belongs to you, because you are a devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa you have no bondage of *saṁsāra*. I addressed you as a materialist just to test you. But you tolerated that from me. From this I can understand that you are a great devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You are residing here with so much material opulence, without being attached to it. To honor your request I will stay in Campakahaṭṭa for some time. You can come to meet me secretly, giving up your opulent lifestyle." The king was very happy to hear this and immediately ordered his minister to build a nice cottage for Kavi Jayadeva at Campakahaṭṭa. Jayadeva stayed there for some time, engaging himself in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* according to *rāga-mārga*. Daily Padmavatī collected a basket full of *campaka* flowers for Jayadeva's worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

One day when Jayadeva was worshiping Kṛṣṇa in great ecstasy, he saw Kṛṣṇa transform to the color of a campaka flower. He accepted the most beautiful effulgence of molten gold. His face was very beautiful, defeating the beauty of millions of moons, and was framed by His gently curling hair. From His neck hung an exquisite flower garland. The entire cottage, which was made of leaves, was illuminated by the effulgence of the Lord's form.

Due to seeing the form of Gaurāṅga the great poet Jayadeva fainted in ecstasy and tears began to flow from his eyes. When Padmavatī-devī also saw that form of Gaurāṅga, she too fainted and fell to the ground, senseless. The Lord mercifully picked both of them up with His lotus hands and told them very sweetly, "You are both My sober devotees and I had a great desire to give My *darśana* to both of you. Very soon, in this city of Nadia, I will take birth as the son of Śacī-devī. I will engage in *śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtana* with all the devotees of My various incarnations and distribute love of Godhead. At the age of twenty-four, I will accept the *sannyāsa* order of life and then travel to Nīlācala-dhāma. There in great ecstasy I will relish Śrī Gīta-Govinda along with all My associates. I must tell you that Śrī Gīta-Govinda, compiled by you, is very dear to Me. This Navadvīpa-dhāma is most certainly a transcendental place and you will come back here after leaving your body. Now both of you go to Nīlācala and serve Lord Jagannātha. By serving Lord Jagannātha you will get pure love of Godhead." Lord Gauracandra then disappeared and both Jayadeva and his wife Padmavatī fainted in separation. When they came to their external senses, they started crying profusely and pleaded, "Alas! What a beautiful form we have seen. How can we now survive, being deprived of that *darśana*? Why did the Lord order us to leave Nadia? We must have committed some offenses. This Navadvīpa is the transcendental *dhāma* of the Lord. Our minds do not want to leave this place. It would be better for us to live in Navadvīpa-dhāma as animals or birds, eternally meditating on the *dhāma*. Our great desire is to never leave this *dhāma* even if we leave our bodies. O, Lord Gaurāṅga! By Your mercy, kindly keep us here, giving us the service of Your lotus feet." Just then an ethereal voice instructed them, "Both of you must go to Nīlācala without feeling any sadness.

> *You will achieve two important objectives by going there, so please do not feel confused.*



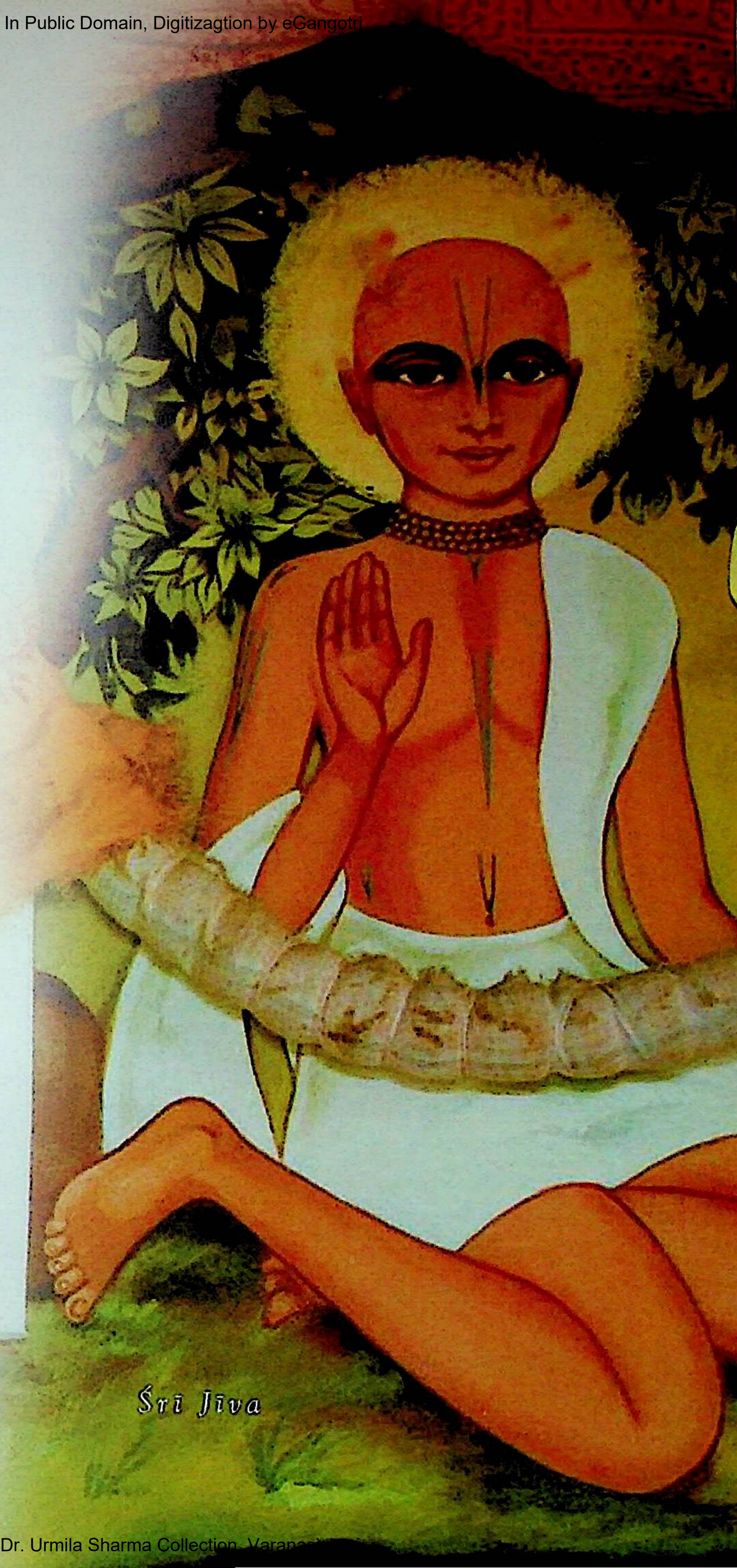
A few days ago both of you had planned to go to Nīlācala-dhāma and live there. Lord Jagabandhu has fulfilled your desire. The Lord also wants to see both of you and after pleasing Him, when you leave your bodies, both of you will again return here to Navadvīpa and remain here eternally." Following this instruction, they started their journey to Nīlācala-dhāma. Repeatedly they looked back to have *darśana* of Navadvīpa, tears flowing from their eyes in separation. With great humility they told the inhabitants of Navadvīpa, "O, Navadvīpa-vāsīs! All of you kindly excuse us for all our offenses."

They could see the eight-petalled lotus form of Navadvīpa-dhāma. They kept looking back at Navadvīpa, until eventually they could see their beloved *dhāma* no more and they began crying in separation as they crossed Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. After a few days they reached Nīlācala-dhāma and were elated to see Lord Jagannātha.

ŚRĪ JĪVA'S ECSTASY ON HEARING THE PASTIMES OF JAYADEVA

Lord Nityānanda described the appearance of Lord Gaurāṅga to the poet Jayadeva, and then said, "Oh, Jīva! This is the place of Jayadeva. Elderly people say that this high land marks the place where Jayadeva was staying." When Lord Nityānanda pointed out the place, Śrī Jīva immediately started rolling on the ground while crying in ecstasy. Śrī Jīva exclaimed, "All glories to poet Jayadeva! All glories to Padmavatī. All glories to Śrī Gīta-Govinda. All glories to Jayadeva and Padmavatī's attachment to Kṛṣṇa. O Lord, what an ocean of *premā* Kavi Jayadeva enjoyed in his life. Kindly give me just a drop of that ocean." While glorifying Jayadeva, Śrī Jīva was rolling on the ground at the lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda.

ĪŚĀNA ṬHĀKURA'S



Śrī Jīva

DESCRIPTION OF CAMPAHAṬṬI

Īśāna Ṭhākura left Samudragarh and reached Campakahaṭṭa. He told Śrīnivāsa, "This most beautiful village is Campakahaṭṭa and is also known as Campahaṭṭi. Previously one old, well-educated *brāhmaṇa* was living here. He was a great devotee of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and a great person in all respects. One day he was worshiping the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with great pleasure, offering Him many *campaka* flowers. He was meditating on the *śyāmala* (blue) form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa within his heart. Suddenly he saw the *gaura* form within the blue form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The splendor of that *gaura* form was like the intense gold of the *campaka* flowers. While he was witnessing this, the *gaura* form immediately disappeared from his heart. He was very perturbed by this and just stared at the bunch of *campaka* flowers with focused attention. By seeing the beauty of the *campaka* flowers within his heart, he began thinking about the basis of *Veda-pramāṇa*. He became pacified and said, 'According to scripture, among all *yugas*, this specific Kali-yuga is particularly blessed. In this Kali-yuga Lord Kṛṣṇa will incarnate in the most attractive form of Gaurāṅga with a golden bodily hue. The most intelligent people will worship Him through *saṅkīrtana-yajña*. All of creation will float in the ocean of His pastimes.' Again he ascertained, after analyzing the scripture, that the Lord would descend in Navadvīpa. He thought, 'The Lord will appear after such a long time. I will not be able to see the transcendental form of Śrī Gaurāṅga.' Lamenting like this he began breathing heavily. His face and chest became drenched in tears and feeling deeply distressed, he lost all control of his emotions. After some time he fell asleep by the desire of the Lord. Lord Gaurahari then appeared to him in his dream. The beauty of His form was like the *campaka* flower. His shining face defeated millions of moons. His head was covered with beautiful curling hair. I cannot make any comparison to His eyes, arms, and chest. His bodily movements can cause the infatuation of the entire universe. Seeing this beautiful form of the Lord the *vipra* was overjoyed. He offered many prayers falling at the lotus feet of the Lord, who blessed the *vipra* and then vanished. As soon as the Lord disappeared, the *vipra* fainted, falling to the ground. After some time, when he regained his normal consciousness, he became mad due to his attachment to the Lord. He looked upon the *campaka* flowers and said again and again, 'You have manifested the *gaura-avatāra* to me.'

He was announcing the glories of the *campaka* flower just as someone makes announcements in the marketplace (*haṭṭa*). Therefore this place was known as Campakahaṭṭi.

By the desire of the Lord, the *vipra* was pacified and the Lord then said, 'Your desires will be fulfilled.' Hearing this, the *vipra* began chanting the glories of the Lord in great ecstasy. He was always thinking about seeing the Lord in Nadia. I cannot adequately describe the activities of this *vipra* who was very dear to the Lord.

Who can describe the pastimes of Gaurāṅga-candra along with His associates in this Campahaṭṭi? Just see! This is the house of Vāṇīnātha Vipra who was very dear to Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga."

CAMPAHAṬṬI

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS WHEN COMING FROM PAÑCAVENI: Cross the Gaurāṅga Bridge and turn left. Continue on this road for approximately four kilometers. At the end of this road turn right and go past a road on the right side and then the left side. Go into the Nimtala Bazar township. This is the area.

Gaura-Gadādhara Gauḍīya Maṭha

DARŚANA TIMES: Approximately 6.00-12.00 a.m. and 3.30-8.00 p.m.

PRESIDING DEITIES: The beatiful life-sized Gaura-Gadādhara deities here were installed and worshiped by Dvija Vāṇīnātha, the younger brother of Gadādhara Paṇḍita. They are over 500 years old. Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established this temple.

Śrī Ṛtudvīpa

This island represents ***arcanam***, worship.

Places to visit on this island are Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, as well as the house of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and Vidyā-vācaspati.

ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA MAHĀPRABHU IN ṚTUDVĪPA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"The island called Ṛtudvīpa is very enchanting, covered with numerous kinds of forests. It is where all the seasons headed by spring are eternally engaged in service to Lord Gaura. The very land relieves all troubles, for it is the abode of transcendental bliss. This area is the same as Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Vraja.

Sometimes during the wild sporting of *saṅkīrtana* at this place and while singing the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Gaurāṅga remembers Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of tending the cows. Thus He loudly and repeatedly calls out the names of the cows: 'O Śyāmalī! O Dhavalī!' Then calling for His cowherd boyfriends Śrīdāmā and Subala, He breaks down and cries in great sorrow."

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA MEDITATES ON ṚTUDVĪPA

"When will I wander about the island of Ṛtudvīpa, seeing the beauty of the forest and remembering these pastimes of the Lord? Suddenly I will catch a glimpse of the pastimes being performed at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and will become completely stunned by such a wonderful vision.

Here on the bank of the Mānasa-gaṅgā, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa along with Their cowherd boyfriends herd countless calves to secluded forests. While sporting numerous pastimes and playing tricks, all the boys sing the glories of Kṛṣṇa.

The cowherd boys then sit down and engage in various types of funny

ṛtudvīpaṁ tato gatvā
dṛṣṭvā śobhāṁ vanasya ca
rādhā-kuṇḍādikaṁ smṛtvā
ruroda śacī-nandanaḥ

"ARRIVING AT ṚTUDVĪPA AND
SEEING THE BEAUTY OF THE
FOREST, ŚACĪ-NANDANA STARTED
CRYING WHILE REMEMBERING
RĀDHĀ-KUṆḌA AND OTHER
SACRED PLACES."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4.44)

conversations. Meanwhile, the calves keep grazing and grazing until they wander off to distant woods. Losing sight of them, all the boys become alarmed, but at the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute the calves immediately come running back.

While I am observing this pastime with full attention, suddenly the scene vanishes and I fall to the ground unconscious ...
... Regaining my awareness after some time, I shall rise up and then continue wandering slowly and sadly throughout the forest.

RIGHT / *Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura*

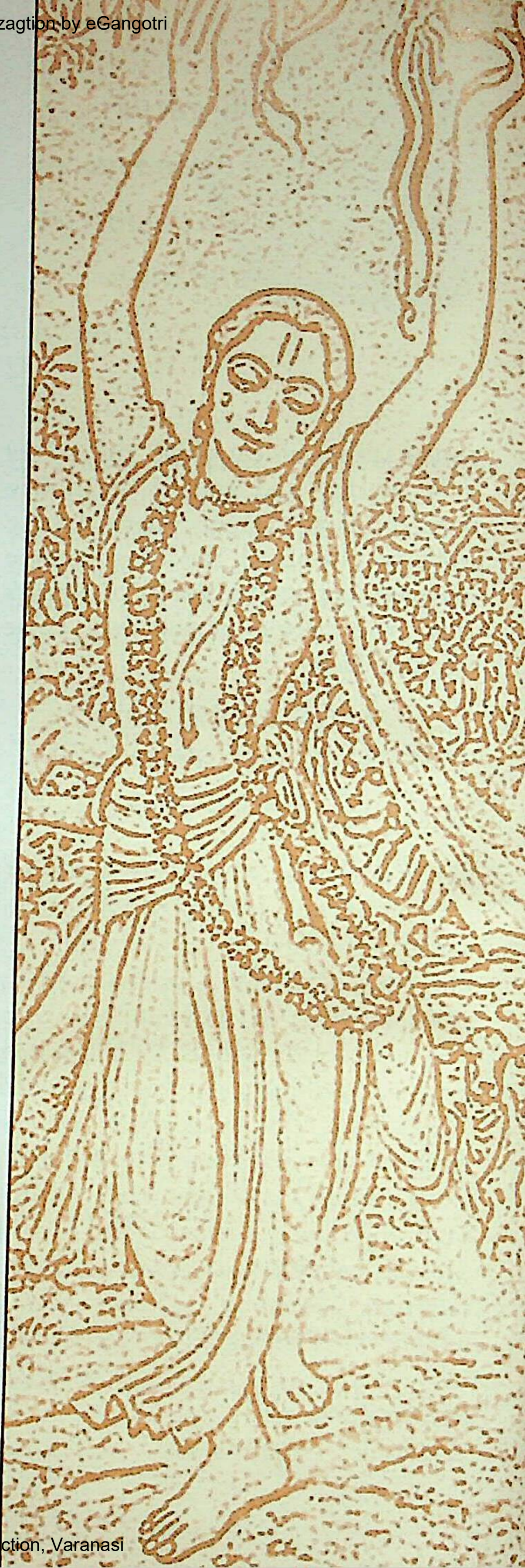
'O Gaurāṅga! O Kṛṣṇacandra, ocean of mercy! You are the wealth of the wretched and poor, and I am the lowest rascal!' Saying this and weeping continuously, I will move onwards till suddenly I come to Vidyānagara."

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

WHY IS THIS ISLAND CALLED ṚTUDVĪPA?

From Campahaṭṭi village Īśāna Ṭhākura came to Rātupura village. He said, "Just see this most beautiful village known as Ṛtudvīpa. Before this was a big village, but now only a village by name. Before many devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa were living here. Lord Gaurāṅga had many wonderful pastimes here in this most attractive Rātupura. Now I will tell you why this place is called Ṛtudvīpa.

Ṛtu means season. All the six seasons, the rainy season, autumn, *hemanta* (early winter), winter, spring and summer seasons live here in their personal forms and speak to each other with very sweet words. One says, 'Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra will appear in Nadia.' Another says, 'The Lord will manifest His wonderful pastimes and increase our happiness with every moment.' Another season asks, 'When will that Vrajendra-nandana appear as Gaurahari to multiply our bliss?' Yet another replies, 'Nārada Muni has announced everywhere that Lord



RIGHT / *Lord Gaurāṅga*

Gaurahari will appear during the first part of Kali-yuga.' One of them asks, 'Tell us, what is the time of His incarnation?' Another one replies, '*Vasanta-ṛtu* (the spring season) is the most fortunate.' *Vasanta* season is very happy to hear this and begins to praise her good fortune. All the seasons (*ṛtus*) along with *ṛtu-rāja* Vasanta (*vasanta* season, the king of all seasons) started to meditate constantly on the advent of the Lord. All the seasons worshiped the Lord here to fulfil their desires. Therefore this place was previously known as Ṛtudvīpa. Whoever visits this holy place will become free from all kinds of suffering and will take birth in Nadia to witness the pastimes of the Lord."

LORD NITYĀNANDA IDENTIFIES RĀDHĀ-KUṆḌA AND ŚYĀMA-KUṆḌA IN ṚTUDVĪPA

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Lord Nityānanda, along with some other devotees, spent the night at the house of Dvija Vāṇīnātha in Campahaṭṭi. Early the next morning the devotees woke up chanting the holy name of Gaura-Nitāicandra. Lord Nityānanda and His companions very happily resumed their journey leaving Campahaṭṭi behind. Vāṇīnātha decided to accompany Lord Nityānanda. He thought to himself, "When will I again be blessed with such an opportunity to perform *parikramā* along with Lord Nityānanda and finish the *parikramā* at the house of Mahāprabhu in Māyāpur?"

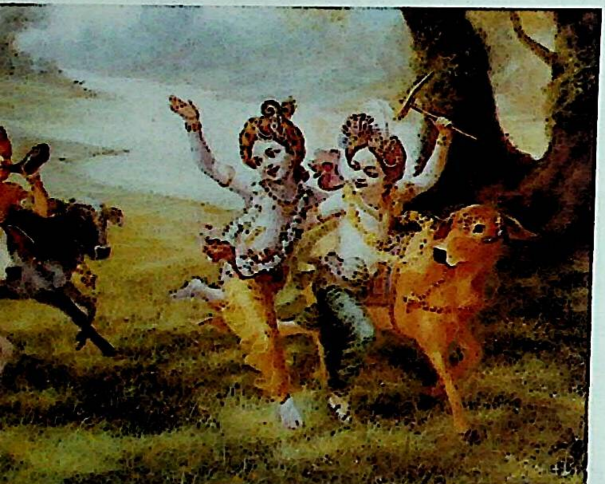
Thus all the devotees were enjoying the beauty of Rātupura, relishing the sight of this most enchanting place.

Lord Nityānanda said,

"Now we have reached Ṛtudvīpa.

This place is very attractive, all the trees here bow down respectfully. There is a soothing breeze blowing and all around so many flowers are blossoming. The humming sound of bumble-bees and the sweet smell of the flowers enchant the minds of the passers-by."

While saying this Lord Nityānanda became entranced and called out, "Bring My *śṛṅga* (horn) immediately! All the calves have gone far away from here. Kānāi is still sleeping in the house. He is so childish that He has not come here yet. Where are Subala and Śrīdāmā? I, Balarāma, am alone here. I cannot go alone to fetch the cows." The most powerful Lord Nityānanda shouted, "Kānāi! Kānāi!" and started leaping in the air. By seeing Lord Nityānanda in this mood, the devotees immediately approached Him and said, "O, Lord Nityānanda! Your brother is Gauracandra. Now He is not here. Gaurahari has taken *sannyāsa* and gone to Nīlācala, leaving us beggars behind."



When Lord Nityānanda heard that Gaurahari was not there, He felt great distress and started crying and rolling on the ground, feeling separation from His Gaura. Lord Nityānanda addressed Gaurāṅga as Kānāi, "O, My brother Kānāi! For what reason have You taken *sannyāsa* and left us behind here to go to Nīlācala? I will not maintain this life anymore. I will jump into the water of the River Yamunā!" Having spoken these words, Lord Nityānanda fainted. The devotees started *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana* realizing that Lord Nityānanda had developed *mahā-bhāva*.

Four *daṇḍas* (one *daṇḍa* equals twenty-four minutes) of the day had passed, but Lord Nityānanda had not come back to His external senses. Then the devotees started to chant *gaura-gītā* (songs about Gaura). When Lord Nityānanda heard the name of Gaurāṅga He immediately got up and said, "This place is Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Here Lord Gaurahari along with His devotees would perform *nāma-saṅkīrtana* every afternoon. Just see the beauty of Śyāma-kuṇḍa, attracting the minds of the whole universe. Just see the *kuñjas* of the different *sakhīs*. Here Gauracandra would come with his *saṅkīrtana* party and please everyone by distributing love of Godhead.

O My brothers, there is no place equal to this in the three worlds. This is the best spot for devotees to perform bhajana.

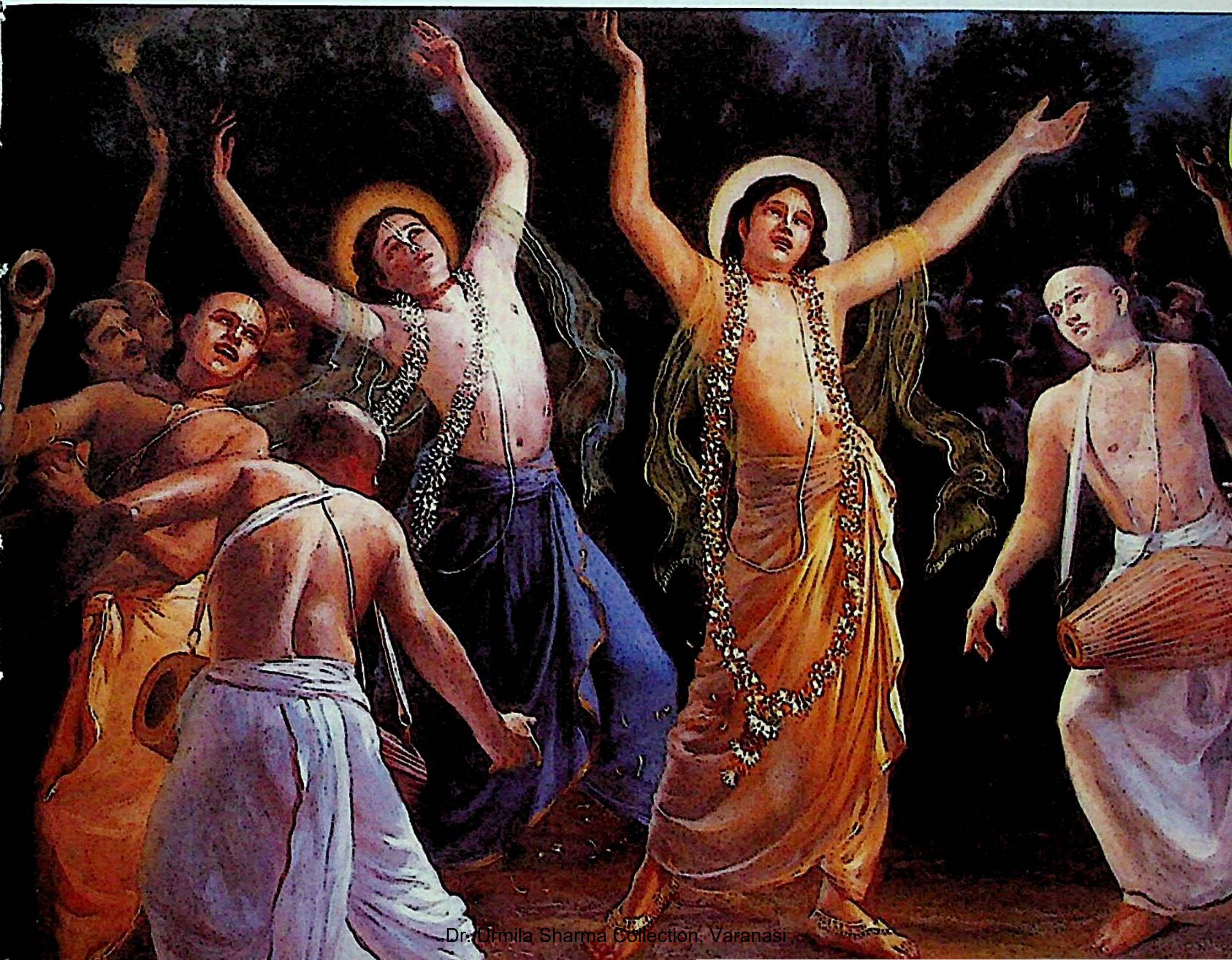
Whoever resides here will get love of Godhead and his heart will be pacified."

That day all the devotees along with Lord Nityānanda stayed there chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga, immersed in love. The next day they proceeded to Vidyānagara.

RĀDHĀ-KUṆḌA

Lord Nityānanda manifested the glories of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in Ṛtudvīpa by pointing out the exact location, the description of which has been given above.

For a long time the exact location of this spot was not known. Subsequently the *ācāryas* of the Gauḍīya-sampradāya have identified a certain place as Rādhā-kuṇḍa and on that basis the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust has acquired the land where Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa are located. This place is situated on the path from Campahaṭṭi to Vidyānagara, on the right in the middle of a field. At present there is no proper path to reach this place but the Bhaktivedanta Swami Charity Trust has a plan to develop this holy area.



VIDYĀNAGARA

tataḥ saṅkīrtanānande
śrī-vidyānagaraṁ hariḥ
dadarśa pārṣadaiḥ sārdhaṁ
veda-sthānam anuttamam

"Then, absorbed in the bliss of *saṅkīrtana*, Lord Gaurahari and His associates saw Vidyānagara, the home of the *Vedas* and the best place to learn them."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4.45)

THE GLORIES OF VIDYĀNAGARA

(from Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga):

"This Vidyānagara is the abode of the four *Vedas* and the sixty-four arts and sciences. Sarasvatī, the goddess of learning, undoubtedly resides here. At this place, Brahmā, Śiva, and the *ṛṣis* revealed all the various types of knowledge to the material world.

Knowing that the Lord would perform His educational pastimes here, Bṛhaspati left his residence in Svarga (heaven), and in his appearance as Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, he taught many types of knowledge according to the various prescribed processes at Vidyānagara.

Whoever lives at Vidyānagara and sings the glories of Gaurāṅga becomes a fortunate teacher and will never know grief. Whoever takes to the worship of Gaurāṅga and receives the *darśana* of His transcendental form will be freed from all ignorance."

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA MEDITATES:

"Will I ever see Gaurasundara as He goes to Vidyānagara, being attracted to acquiring knowledge? The Lord defended His devotee here and chastised Devānanda Paṇḍita with strong words for committing an offense to Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura.

Even Ananta Śeṣa does not fully understand the pastimes of my Lord. When He becomes absorbed in these activities, what is His real intention? Why does He give up chanting to chastise the students who criticized Him? What type of happiness does He derive from defeating His teachers?

But whatever the Lord does is a cause of bliss. The Lord is independent, and I am simply His servant. My very limited intelligence has no power to judge Him.

All the inhabitants of Navadvīpa who act as the Lord's teachers, nourish His eternal pastimes and are worthy of my respect. All of you please be merciful to this miserable pauper; give me the qualification for *nāma-saṅkīrtana*.

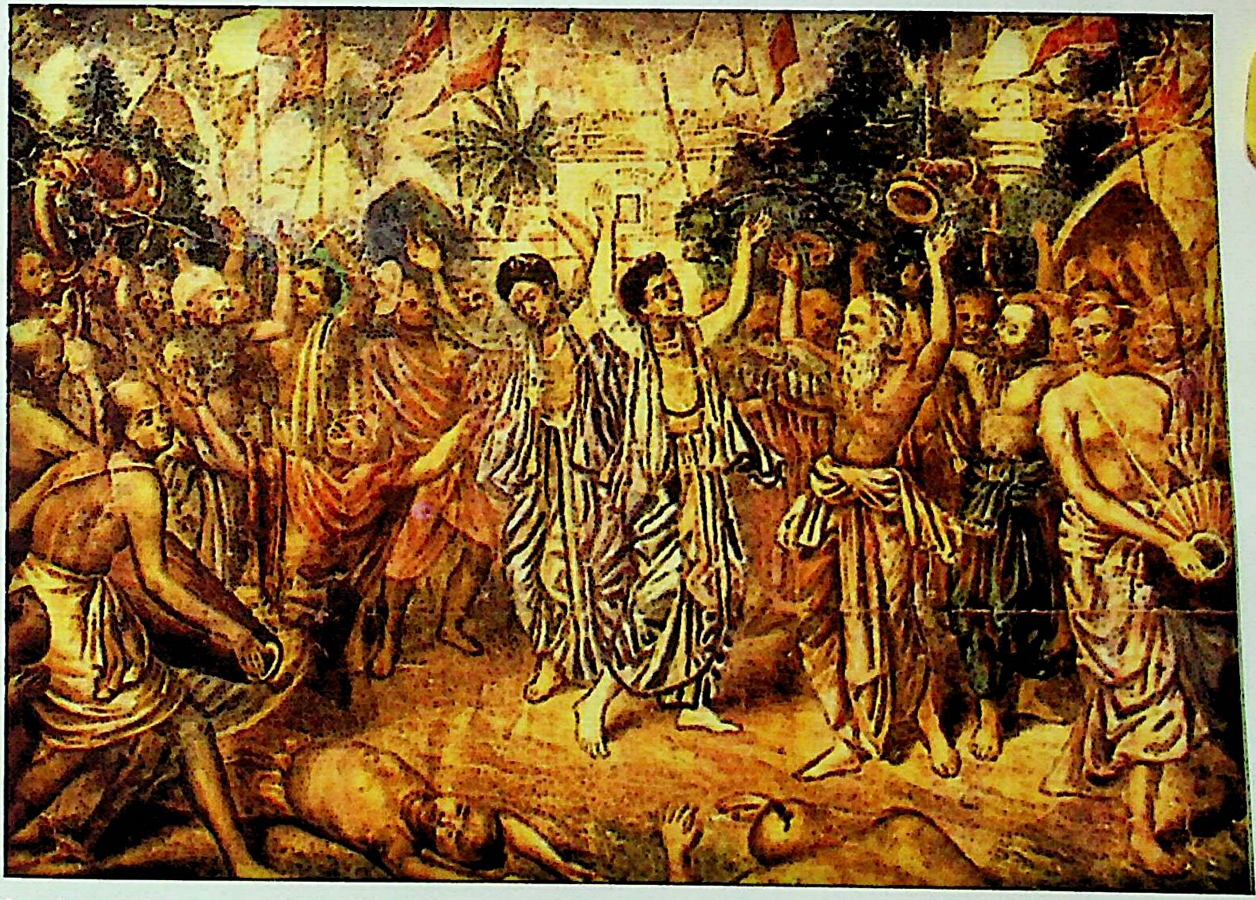
I make this petition to the *tīrtha* of Vidyānagara: May the ignorance which hides Gaurāṅga's identity never cover my mind. May my mind transcend this *māyā*." (Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

WHY IS THIS PLACE NAMED VIDYĀNAGARA?

(a passage from the Bhakti-ratnākara)

From Ṛtudvīpa, Īśāna Ṭhākura proceeded towards Vidyānagara. With great ecstasy in his heart, Īśāna Ṭhākura spoke very sweet words to Śrīnivāsa, Narottama and Rāmacandra, "Just behold this Vidyānagara. How beautiful it looks! I will now tell you why this place is known as Vidyānagara.

One day in the assembly of the demigods, Bṛhaspati became very concerned. Seeing Bṛhaspati in this condition, the demigods inquired about the reason for it. Bṛhaspati replied in great ecstasy, 'In this Kali-yuga, the Lord will appear in the city of Nadia in the house of Jagannātha Miśra. Lord Gauracandra, the son of Jagannātha Miśra, manifests different pastimes in different incarnations. He was very expert in the art of weaponry during His incarnation as Lord Rāmacandra. He was the chief in grazing cows when He appeared as Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra. In this incarnation as Śrī Gauracandra He will be the most learned. Others cannot understand what great joy His pastimes will manifest. The Lord will fulfil all His desires. He will enjoy like



In this Kali-yuga, the Lord will appear in the city of Nadia in the house of Jagannātha Miśra.

never before. I cannot control myself any longer. I must go to Navadvīpa immediately and worship the Lord there upon His appearance.' Saying these words, Bṛhaspati started his journey, meditating upon the *śrī-vidyā* pastimes of the Lord every day. Bṛhaspati came here to Nadia because the Lord would manifest His educational pastimes here.

In this regard Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura has mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, 'For this pastime the most worshipable Bṛhaspati, along with his disciples, appeared in Navadvīpa.'

Īśāna Ṭhākura continued, "O, Śrīnivāsa! Bṛhaspati worships Śrī Gaurasundara in this Vidyānagara. The Lord revealed to Bṛhaspati that He would soon descend to Navadvīpa along with His associates and He ordered Bṛhaspati to appear there as well, to preach various branches of knowledge. Bṛhaspati was very pleased to hear this and began to study with such dedication that it cannot be described. Bṛhaspati started to preach about education (*vidyā*) for the pleasure of the Lord. Therefore this place is known as Vidyānagara. One will achieve all kinds of perfection by visiting Vidyānagara.

In this Vidyānagara Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu along with His associates would visit the devotees from house to house with great pleasure."

In *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya* Lord Nityānanda has explained to Śrī Jīva: "Navadvīpa-dhāma exists eternally. Even at the time of *pralaya* (annihilation), this *dhāma* remains untouched and pure in the form of an eight-petalled lotus.

At that time, all the incarnations and hundreds of fortunate living entities stay in one portion of this lotus.

Vidyānagara is located in Ṛtudvīpa, where the Lord in His transcendental form of Matsya resides at the time of annihilation, holding all the *Vedas*. This place is named Vidyānagara because all knowledge (*vidyā*) stays here, taking shelter of the *Vedas*."

JUST BY HEARING THE WORD VIDYĀNAGARA ONE BECOMES FREE FROM ALL IGNORANCE!

HOUSE OF SĀRVABHAUMA BHAṬṬĀCĀRYA AND VIDYĀVĀCASPATI

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"At this place is the school of Vidyāvācaspati, the popular son of Viśārada. Who did not know him? Being the unalloyed servant of the Lord, by the power of his pure devotion he attracted his own Prabhu once while taking bath in the Gaṅgā.

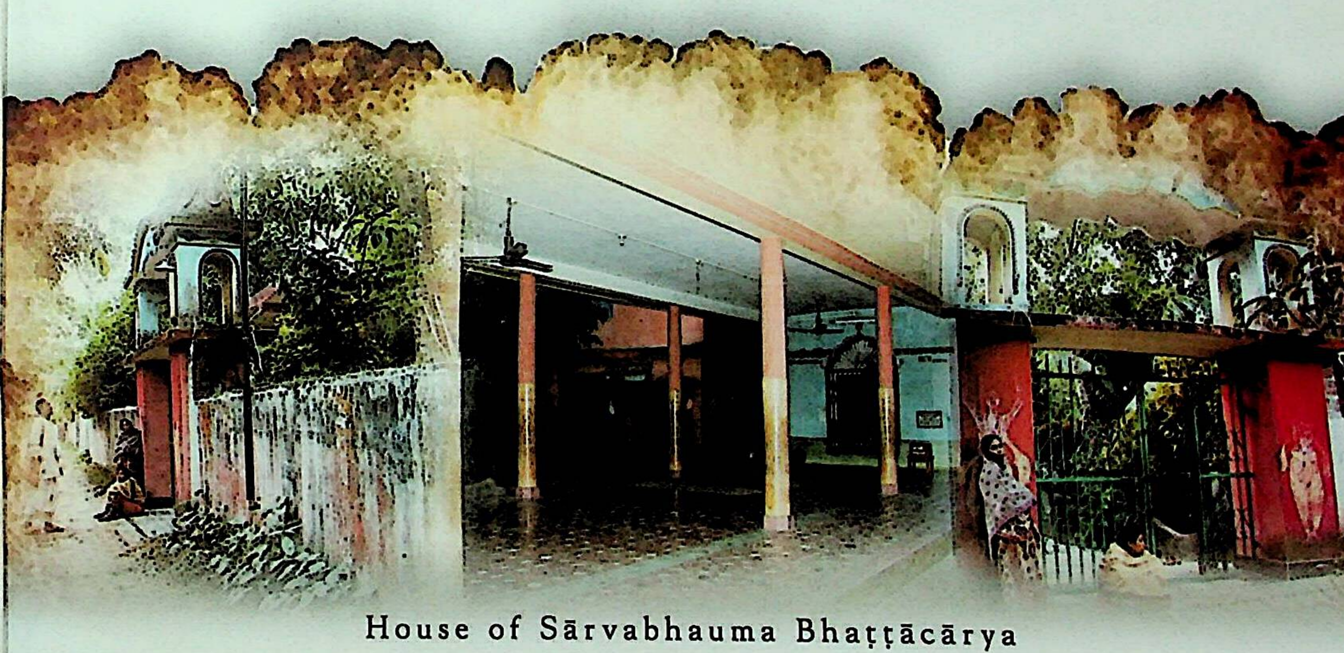
When will I stand still on this bank of the Gaṅgā by the door of Vidyāvācaspati's school and view the opulence of the spiritual kingdom? After a few moments, will the Lord who is the king among *sannyāsīs*, suddenly appear in the palace before my very eyes?

Seeing the golden effulgence of the Lord in the form of a *sannyāsī*, I will fall to the ground in great anxiety. I will feel just as the *gopīs* did upon seeing Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā dressed like a royal prince; thus they cried while remembering His sweet and simple cowherd pastimes on the bank of the Yamunā.

I long to take the moonlike Gauracandra back to Māyāpur where He is dressed like a young boy and His divine limbs are radiant, decorated with ornaments, where His hair is long and curly and His *dhotī* folded thrice, where He performs pastimes with His devotees in His own garden named Īśodyāna.

Of course, this *sannyāsī* is my Lord and I am just His servant. These different appearances that the Lord assumes are but some of His unlimited pastimes. Still, my heart longs to take the Lord back to the temple of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita on the bank of Pṛthu-kuṇḍa!"

This is where Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya took birth around 1460 and where he lived in his early life. This place is on the western boundary of Navadvīpa-



House of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya

dhāma. Vidyānagara is the original source of the Vedas and is the main center of learning for the universe. Lord Brahmā taught the demigods and sages at this place.

Nearby stand eleven trees which, according to experts, do not belong to any known species. There is one tree which is said to have been created by Lord Caitanya when he planted a pen in the ground.

Lord Caitanya would come here and defeat all the disciples of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya. There is now a Gauḍīya Maṭha temple here, established by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja.

This Gauḍīya Maṭha marks the birthplace of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya and his brother Vidyā-vācaspati. The *kalam* trees or 'pen trees' mark the place where Vidyā-vācaspati opened his school.

When Lord Caitanya was going to Vṛndāvana for the first time, He stopped in Vidyānagara for five days at the house of Vidyā-vācaspati.

While Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was staying at Vidyā-vācaspati's house, many hundreds of thousands of people came to see Him and chanted the holy name of Hari. It was so crowded that people could not even find a place to walk; therefore they made room by clearing out the jungles near the village. Many people also came by boat to see the Lord, in fact so many came that it was difficult for the boatmen to get them across the river. Due to this great crowd, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu secretly went to Kuliyā-nagara.

Kalam trees (pen trees), Vidyānagara

PRACTICAL GUIDE

VIDYĀNAGARA GAUḌĪYA MAṬHA

DARŚANA TIMES: 6.00 a.m-12.00 and 4.00-8.00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Take the Navadvipa-Krishnanagar Highway No. 8 under Narasiṁhapallī (Godrumadvīpa). Cross the Gaurāṅga Bridge and turn right when you reach the T-junction. This is the Navadvipa-Katwa Road. Proceed for approximately six kilometers. You will pass some concrete houses on the left. Shortly after that, you will come to a village shopping area. Make a left turn where you see a subji market (usually open until around noontime) and then, after a short distance, take the first right. On this road you will cross a bridge which goes over the remains of the Gaṅgā River who used to flow here in Lord Caitanya's time. Take the first local road on the right side. This local road becomes smaller and goes into a village. Turn right and go through this village until you see a sparse brick building (a small school) in an open area on the left side. This temple is down the path opposite the school.

PRESIDING DEITIES: Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura established this small temple. The beautiful life-sized neem Gaura-Nitāi deities here were worshiped by Vidyā-vācaspati, the brother of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya.

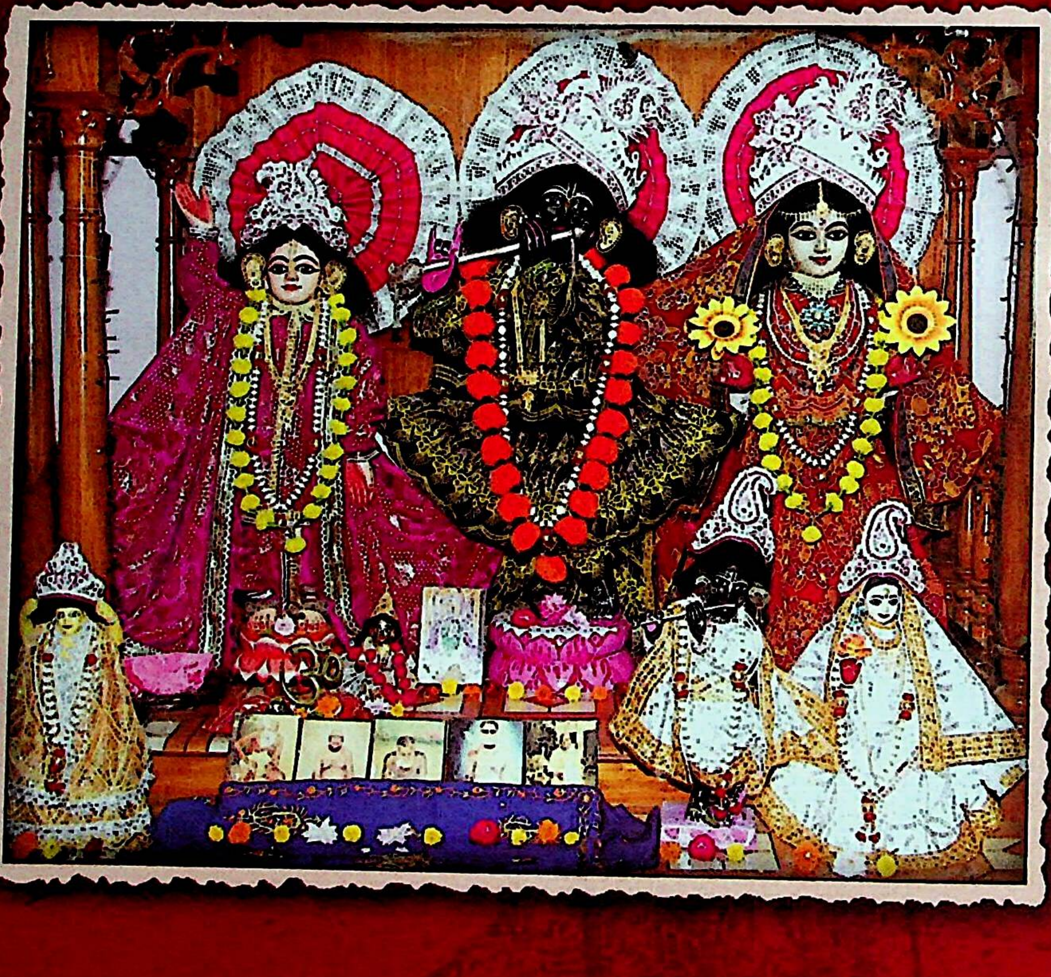
POINTS OF INTEREST: It is said that the group of trees (on the left side before the temple) do not belong to any known species, and that they manifested from some pens Nimāi planted in the ground.

SĀRVABHAUMA BHAṬṬĀCĀRYA TEMPLE

DARŚANA TIMES: 6.00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 3.00-8.00 p.m.

DIRECTIONS: Take the small path on the right side of the Vidyānagara Gauḍīya Maṭha. Proceed through a local mud-hut village and then turn left at the T-junction. A short distance down this path is a temple where Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya's house used to be located.

PRESIDING DEITIES: Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Śyāmasundara and Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu



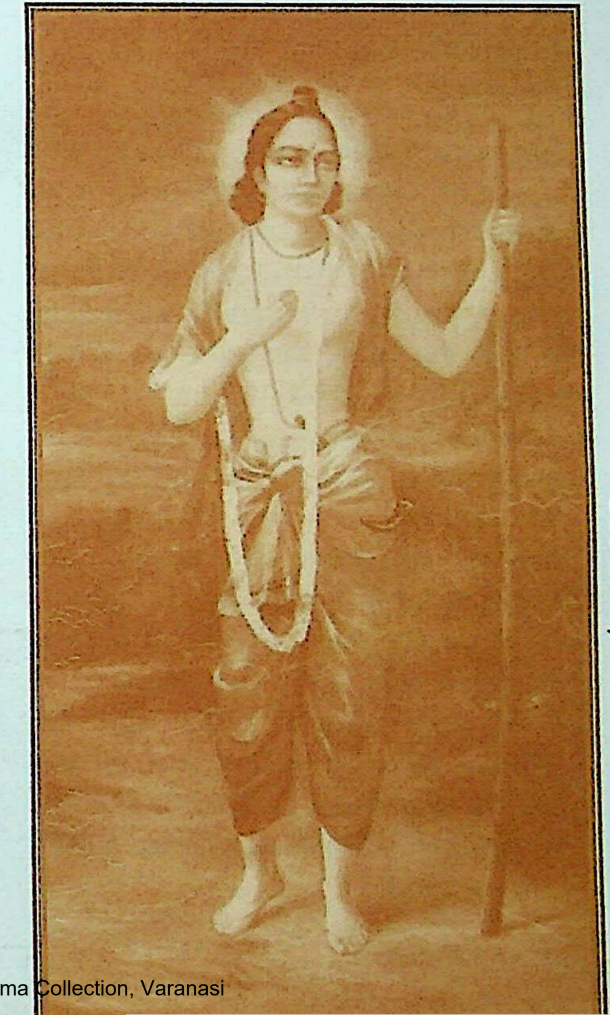
BṚHASPATI APPEARED AS VĀSUDEVA SĀRVABHAUMA

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu explained to Śrī Jīva, "This Kali-yuga in which Lord Gaurāṅga has appeared, is blessed and is the cream of all *yugas*. Lord Gaurasundara manifests His *vidyā* pastimes in this *yuga*. Therefore Bṛhaspati descended here along with his associates. Bṛhaspati took birth as Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma to please Lord Gaurāṅga. Knowing His Lord would enjoy the *vidyā-rasa*, Bṛhaspati along with his associates left *indra-sabhā* (Indra's court) and appeared at different places for the Lord's pleasure. Sārvabhauma Mahāśaya opened *ṭolās* (schools) in Vidyānagara and spread knowledge. He thought, 'In the future, due to the influence of dry knowledge, I may lose Śrī Gaurāṅga.' Thinking like this he left behind his disciples and went to another area, leaving Nadia before the appearance of the Lord. He thought to himself, 'If I am a real servant of Gaurāṅga then the Lord, being merciful upon me, will bring me to Him.' Thinking like this Sārvabhauma went to Nīlācala-dhāma and established *māyāvāda-śāstra* there very strongly. Here in Vidyānagara, Gauracandra Mahāprabhu enjoyed *vidyā-vilāsa* by defeating the disciples of Sārvabhauma in a very simple way, just by joking with them (*parihāsa*). Whenever Lord Gaura Rāya came to Vidyānagara He would defeat all the scholars through *nyāya-phāṅki* (debate). All the teachers and students would run away, being defeated by Gaurāṅga. These descriptions of Gaurāṅga's *vidyā-līlā* are very wonderful.

Whoever listens to these pastimes becomes free from ignorance."

Hearing this, Śrī Jīva rolled on the ground in ecstasy at Vedanagara (the place of the *Vedas*).



Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu

THE APPEARANCE OF SARASVATĪ-DEVĪ

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Lord Nityānanda said, "After the annihilation when the time of creation again arrives, Brahmā becomes very fearful witnessing the vast annihilation. At that time the Lord shows him His mercy.

Here Brahmā offered prayers to the Lord and just as he opened his mouth to begin his offering, Sarasvatī-devī appeared from his tongue in her most beautiful form. Then, by the energy of Sarasvatī, Brahmā offered a *stava* (prayer) to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa with great happiness.

When creation takes place, *māyā* covers all directions. *Māyā*, comprised of the three modes of material nature, remains on the bank of the Virajā River. The *ṛṣis* try to establish knowledge in the material world manifested by *māyā*. This is Śāradā-pīṭha, the place of Sarasvatī (Śāradā). By taking shelter of this holy place, the *ṛṣis* defeat *avidyā* (ignorance). They learn the sixty-four varieties of *vidyā* (knowledge) and propagate this knowledge in various places on the earth planet. Whatever branch of *vidyā* they may practice, all of the *ṛṣis* eternally reside here. Śrī Vālmīki received *kāvya-rasa* at this place by the mercy of Nārada Ṛṣi and compiled the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Dhanvantari received *Āyur Veda* here. *Ṛṣis* like Viśvāmitra also came here to learn archery. Śaunaka Ṛṣi read the Vedic *mantras* at this place. Mahādeva Śiva also discussed *tantra* here. Brahmā manifested the four *Vedas* here at the request of the *ṛṣis*. Kapila Muni compiled *sāṅkhya* sitting at this place. Śrī Gautama Ṛṣi manifested *nyāya* and *tarka* (logic) sitting here. Kaṇāda Muni revealed the *vaiśeṣika* philosophy, sage Patañjali revealed the *yoga-śāstra*, Jaimini wrote the treatises on *mīmāṁsā*, Vedavyāsa revealed the *Purāṇas*, and the *Pañcarātra* was written by five sages including Nārada Muni.

> All these philosophies were manifested here and then taught to the people in general."

ŚRUTIS BLESSED BY LORD GAURĀṄGA

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

In this garden, the *Upaniṣads* worshiped Śrī Gaurāṅga for a long time. Śrī Gaurahari, by means of an unseen sound vibration, informed them that their knowledge had been contaminated by the understanding of impersonalism. "None of you will attain Me in this form of *śruti*. When you appear as My associates during My manifested pastimes, then you will all see Me. At that time all of you will glorify My qualities." Hearing this, the *śrutis* kept quiet and stayed here secretly waiting for a suitable time.

LORD NITYĀNANDA DISPELS THE DOUBTS OF ŚRĪ JĪVA

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Śrī Jīva inquired from Śrī Nityananda Prabhu, in order to remove his doubts, "The knowledge of *sāṅkhya* and logic is very inauspicious. How then did these sciences remain here in the eternal *dhāma*?" Hearing his question Nityānanda embraced Jīva very affectionately and said, "Hari bol! Hari bol! In the holy abode of the Lord there is nothing inauspicious. Logic and *sāṅkhya* are not so powerful or prominent here independently. They stay here as the servants of *bhakti* and trap some wicked people who are suffering the results of their bad *karma*. *Bhakti* is *mahā-devī* here and all others are her servants. Everyone here assists in manifesting *bhakti*. In Navadvīpa, nine kinds of devotional service exist. Here *karma* and *jñāna* serve *bhakti*. *Śāstra* serves to further contaminate the intelligence of those who are adverse to Kṛṣṇa. But to gentlemen the same *śāstra* gives attachment to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Prauḍhā Māyā is the predominating deity here. Every *yuga* she remains engaged as the servant of Gaurāṅga in this holy abode. If someone becomes averse to the Vaiṣṇavas due to bad *karma*, *māyā* makes him blind and gives him much suffering. All sins and all *karma* are destroyed here by Prauḍhā Māyā in her transcendental form. But if someone is offensive to Vaiṣṇavas, Prauḍhā Māyā removes him from here. Those wicked people, even though they may possess vast knowledge, still do not attain love at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. They receive *avidyā* and therefore do not see Śrī Gaurāṅga and the opulence of Nadia. Therefore *vidyā* is not inauspicious, only the *avidyā* (the shadow portion of *vidyā*) is inauspicious. Dear Jīva, all these truths will become apparent to you by the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga and by the will of the Lord you will mention all this in the many scriptures that will manifest through you."

Śrī Jahnudvīpa

This island represents ***vandanam***, praying.

Jahnudvīpa is nondifferent from Bhadravana, one of the twelve forests of Vraja. The important place to visit on this island is Jahnu Muni's āśrama.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"Towards the north of Vidyānagara lies the extremely beautiful Jahnudvīpa. There, visible to all, is the forest where sage Jahnu performed his austerities. Jahnu Muni drank the water of the Gaṅgā and Gaṅgā-devī reappeared from this great sage, thus she is known as Jāhnavī.z

The *āśrama* of Bhīṣmadeva, the great devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is also located here. At this place Bhīṣmadeva systematically learned about *bhāgavata-dharma* and here Jahnu Muni, worshiping the Lord without any duplicity, easily achieved the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya.

This Jahnudvīpa is non-different from Bhadravana of Vraja where Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa had His pastimes. When will my eyes become sufficiently cleansed so I may see this place? In that Bhadravana is the most purifying Bhīṣma-ṭilā (hillock). When will I reside there and perform my worship?

During the night Bhīṣmadeva, with great satisfaction in his heart, will manifest his pure form to give me his *darśana*. He will appear in front of me with a black *tulasī-mālā* decorating his neck and his body marked with *dvādaśa-tilakas* (twelve clay marks). Bhīṣmadeva will appear in this way and advise me as follows:

'Listen, new inhabitant of Navadvīpa, as I sing the glories of Gaurāṅga. While dying on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra, I was able to see Lord Kṛṣṇa with full concentration. At that time the Lord told me, 'Previously, you had *darśana* of Navadvīpa, and for that pious activity, you have gained Gaurāṅga's mercy.'

Now you have become an eternal inhabitant of Navadvīpa, therefore you should give up all other desires

jahnudvīpam samāsādya
dṛṣṭvā jahnu-tapovanam
modadrume rāma-līlāṁ
smaran gauraḥ mumoda ha

"ŚRĪ GAURASUNDARA VISITED
THE ĀŚRAMA OF JAHNU MUNI
IN JAHNUDVĪPA. THE LORD WAS
JOYFUL UPON REMEMBERING THE
PASTIMES OF ŚRĪ RĀMACANDRA
IN MODADRUMADVĪPA."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 46)

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and aspirations, live in Navadvīpa and worship Gaurahari. You need no longer fear the bondage of material objects, for it is certain that you will attain the service of Gaurāṅga's lotus feet. By the Lord's mercy, liberated souls can always see the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Gaura in this *dhāma*.

> *Lamentation, fear, death, all causes of disturbance, all material desires, and all afflictions of the conditioned soul cannot exist here.*

The pure devotees have all sunk in an ocean of happiness by drinking the intoxicating beverage of service to Kṛṣṇa. They do not know the pains of this world, nor do they experience the scarcity, pain or suffering of material existence, because they are situated in pure bodies with pure desires.

The Supreme Lord, who has unlimited, liberated followers, some of whom are eternally situated and others who come from the material world, performs His pastimes in these forests with each devotee according to his respective emotional mood.

This place is unlimited and has no tinge of material illusion, for here the spiritual energy is the predominating goddess. Here, place, the senses, and the body, all exist beyond the illusory energy in a state of pure goodness.

By the Lord's desire, as long as one does not give up the bodily concept and one's intelligence remains attached to material designations, the true *dhāma* will not be visible in its entirety.

By the Lord's mercy, you will receive a spiritual body, and your progress here will be unobstructed. The illusion of material energy will retreat, and you will experience unlimited bliss in this eternal spiritual realm.

But as long as you have this material body, carefully remain fixed in the principles of *bhakti*. Always serve the devotees, chant the name of Kṛṣṇa, worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and remain indifferent to sense gratification.

By the mercy of the devotees, the name, and the *dhāma*, keep undesirable association far away. Soon you will attain residence in the eternal *dhāma* where pure service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa manifests.'

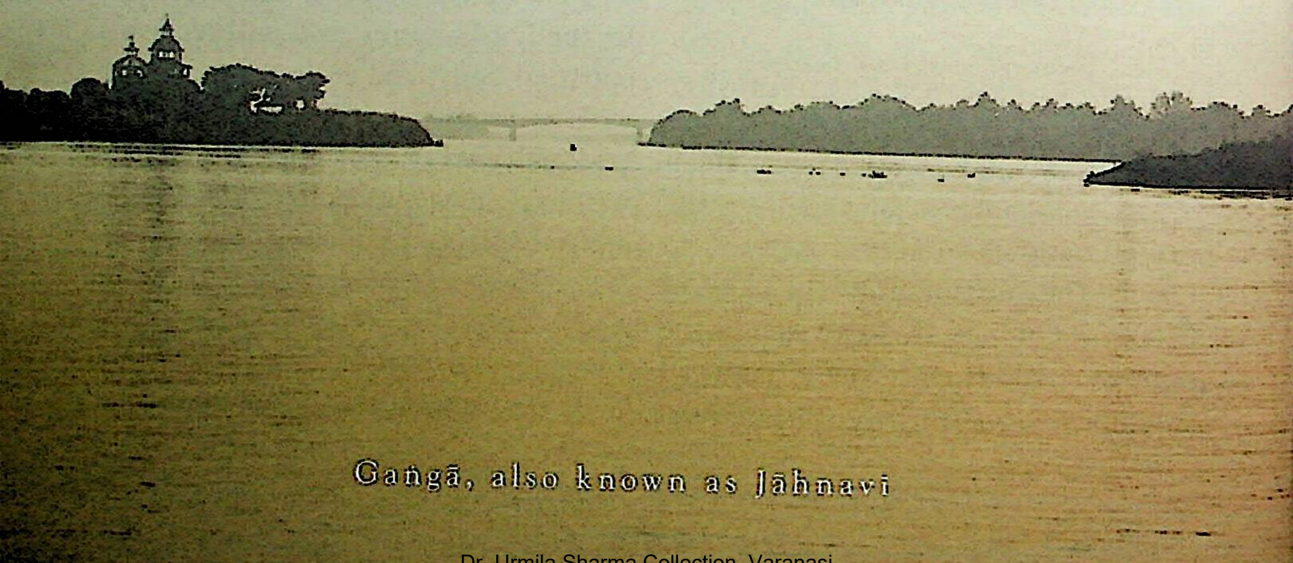
Hearing these instructions of Bhīṣmadeva, I will offer my full obeisances at his feet. After blessing me he will disappear, and weeping, I will proceed to Modadruma forest."

(Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga)

HOW THE GAṄGĀ BECAME KNOWN AS JĀHNAVĪ

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Lord Nityānanda along with other devotees entered Jānnagara and they witnessed the beauty of the *tapovana* (hermitage) where Jahnu Muni resided. Lord Nityānanda said, "This island, known as Jahnudvīpa, is non-different from Bhadravana of Vraja-maṇḍala. At this place Jahnu Muni performed *tapasya* causing Lord Gaurāṅga to appear in front of him in His golden form.



Gaṅgā, also known as Jāhnavī

Here Jahnu Muni used to chant his Gāyatrī *mantra* as the Bhāgīrathī River was flowing near his *āśrama*. Once, the *muni*'s *ācamana* cup and spoon fell into the powerful river and were carried away by the strong current of the Bhāgīrathī. Jahnu Muni was furious and drank the entire Gaṅgā. Naturally King Bhagīratha was disturbed by this and thought, 'Where did Gaṅgā disappear to?'

He became very worried when he came to know that Jahnu Muni had drunk all the water of the Gaṅgā. King Bhagīratha then worshiped Jahnu Muni for some time to please him. Being pleased with the King, Jahnu Muni cut his thigh and let Gaṅgā flow out from his body. Since then her name has been Jāhnavī and she became famous as the daughter of Jahnu Muni."

Somewhere else it has been mentioned that the Gaṅgā flowed from sage Jahnu's ear.

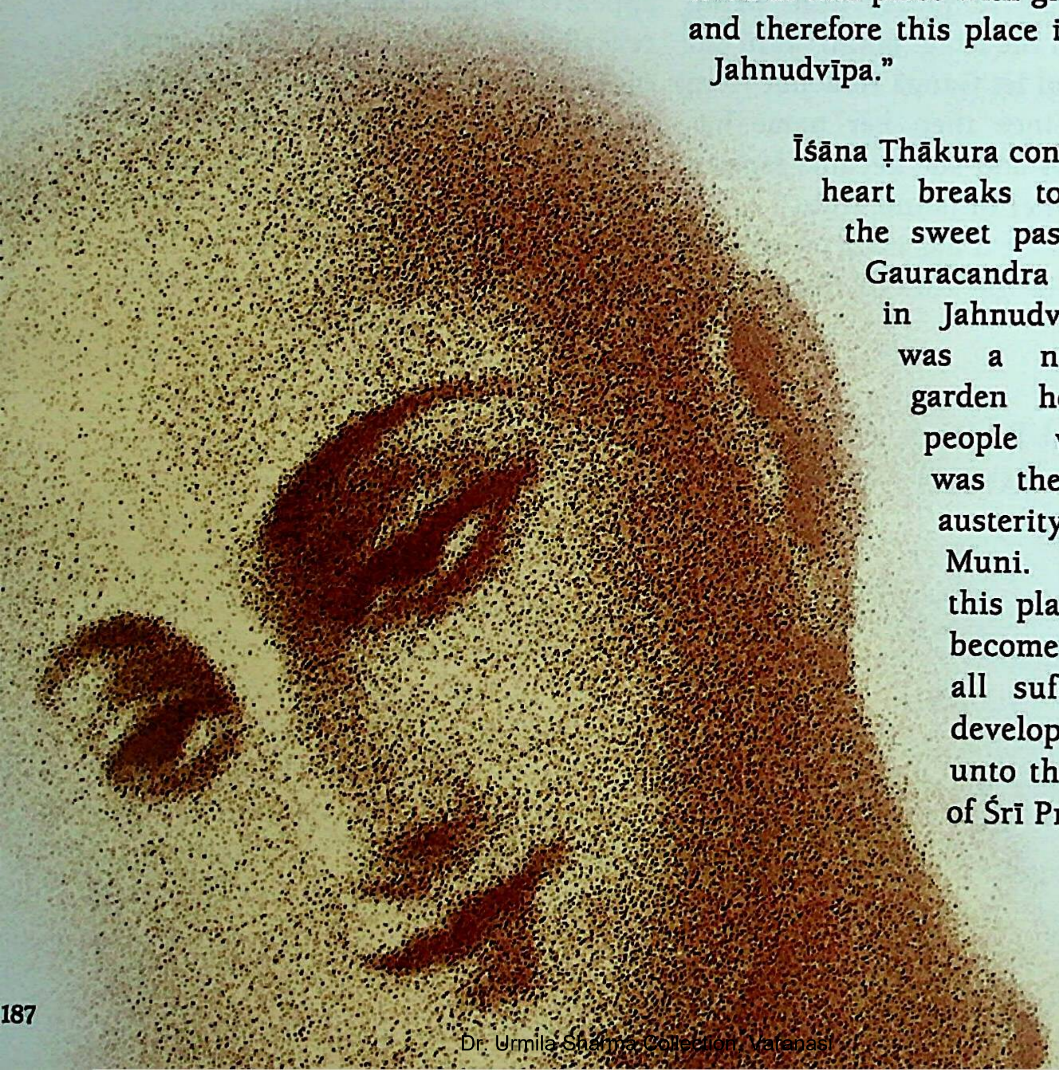
LORD GAURĀṄGA MANIFESTED TO JAHNU MUNI

(from Bhakti-ratnākara)

Jahnudvīpa is also known as Jānnagara. Īśāna Ṭhākura told Śrīnivāsa, "Previously this place was known as Jānnadvīpa. Jahnu Muni used to reside here in Navadvīpa very happily. Once he thought, 'This Kali-yuga is more blessed than other Kali-yugas, because Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu will appear. He, along with the dear devotees of all His incarnations, will descend in this Navadvīpa-dhāma during the first part of Kali-yuga. He will accept an incomparable golden bodily lustre and His bodily movements will be very pleasing. He will perform many wonderful pastimes in Navadvīpa. Will my desire be fulfilled to see these nectarian pastimes of the Lord?'

His mind fixed in meditation with great bliss, the *muni* worshiped Śrī Gauracandra who attracts the entire universe by His beauty. When the sage closed his eyes, the merciful Lord appeared within his heart. The Lord revealed Himself in His beautiful form of Śyāmasundara, attracting everyone in the three worlds. His body was gracefully bent in three places and a peacock feather decorated His head. He was playing His flute which He held gently in His hand and His most beautiful face was dazzling.

While the sage was beholding this form, he saw the Lord transform into a young *sannyāsī*. The Lord in His *sannyāsī* form was holding a *daṇḍa* and a *kamaṇḍalu* (waterpot) in His hands and His head was shaved without any *śikhā*. He was wearing saffron-colored cloth and a *kaupīna*. The radiance of His body defeated the glare of millions of suns. When the *muni* saw this, he could not control himself anymore and he opened his eyes. Upon doing so he saw the Lord standing in front of him face to face. The Lord's beautiful curling hair was making everyone mad. Many dazzling ornaments decorated His body, the effulgence of which lit the universe. Even gold appeared without luster in comparison to this glow. His bodily movements destroyed the pride of millions of Kandarpas. By seeing this form, Jahnu Muni experienced great bliss and ecstasy. Seeing the sage in this condition, Śrī Gaurahari pacified him by His mercy. Jahnu Muni fell at the lotus feet of the Lord in great bliss and washed His lotus feet with the tears pouring from his eyes. He offered many prayers standing in front of the Lord and fixed his eyes on His lotus face. The Lord embraced him again and again, saying, 'All of your desires will be fulfilled.' The Lord then disappeared and by His desire Jahnu Muni regained his composure. He began to praise his good fortune, 'After all these days finally my austerity has been successful.' The *muni* then looked in all directions with a great desire to behold the glories of Nadia. He began constantly chanting the glories of Nadia-candra, Śrī Gaurāṅga, day and night. His body was smeared with dust and soaked with his tears. Jahnu Muni lived at this place with great pleasure and therefore this place is known as Jahnudvīpa."



Īśāna Ṭhākura continued, "My heart breaks to remember the sweet pastimes Lord Gauracandra performed in Jahnudvīpa. There was a nice flower garden here, which people would say was the place of austerity of Jahnu Muni. By seeing this place one will become free from all suffering and develop pure *bhakti* unto the lotus feet of Śrī Prabhu."

JAHNU MUNI'S ĀŚRAMA

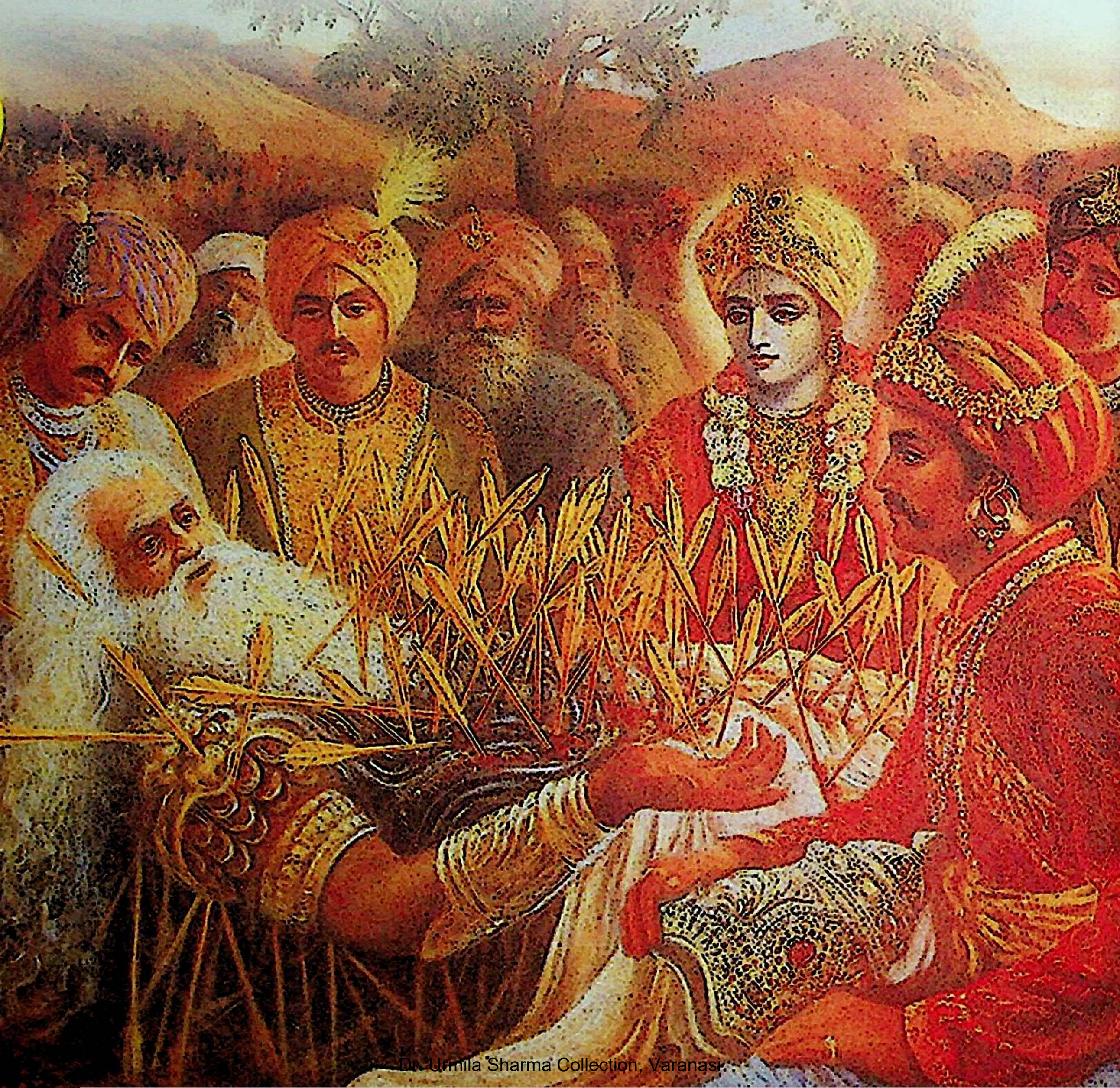
PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS:
This is on the main Navadvipa-Katwa road shortly before the turn off to go to Māmgāchi. There is no *āśrama* there now, but the place can be identified by the big banyan tree there. It is said that Jahnu Muni's *āśrama* was situated under this tree.

BHĪṢMA-ṬILĀ

Bhīṣmadeva, the son of King Śāntanu, was born from his mother Gaṅgā-devī at this place. He then studied with Bṛhaspati in the heavenly planets. When his studies were completed, Gaṅgā-devī brought him back to earth and left him in the care of his father. At this time Bhīṣma came to see his maternal grandfather Jahnu Muni and he was told that Lord Caitanya would appear in Navadvīpa-dhāma. Jahnu Muni also instructed him on religious principles, political science, the Supreme Lord and devotional service.

While Bhīṣma was lying on his deathbed of arrows at Kurukṣetra, he spoke about the appearance of Lord Gaurāṅga.



suvarṇa-varṇo hemāṅgo
varāṅgaś candanāṅgadī
sannyāsa-kṛc chamaḥ śānto
niṣṭhā-śānti-parāyaṇaḥ

"In His early pastimes He appears as a householder with a golden complexion. His limbs are beautiful, and His body, smeared with the pulp of sandalwood, seems like molten gold. In His later pastimes He accepts the *sannyāsa* order, and He is equipoised and peaceful. He is the highest abode of peace and devotion, for He silences the impersonalist nondevotees."

(Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma-stotra)

Bhīṣmadeva performed austerities and received *darśana* of Lord Caitanya. The Lord informed Bhīṣma that he would attain Navadvīpa in the future and that he would teach King Yudhiṣṭhira the highest knowledge at the time of death.

BHĪṢMADEVA

(from Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa)

Bhīṣmadeva is the son of Gaṅgā-devī. Since Gaṅgā-devī appeared from Jahnu Muni, she became his daughter and thus Jahnu Muni became the grandfather of Bhīṣmadeva. After some time Bhīṣmadeva came here to meet with his grandfather and grandmother. Jahnu Muni very affectionately kept Bhīṣmadeva at his *āśrama* for a long period, during which he taught him about *dharma*. Bhīṣma passed this knowledge on to Yudhiṣṭhira while lying on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra on a bed of arrows. While staying in Navadvīpa, Bhīṣmadeva received *bhakti* and therefore became famous as a great Vaiṣṇava.

The island of Jahnudvīpa is therefore very purifying. Only the most fortunate people eternally reside here."

That day Lord Nityānanda, along with His associates, stayed in Jahnudvīpa in the house of the devotees. The next morning He took all the devotees to Modadrumadvīpa.

Śrī Modadrumadvīpa

This island represents ***dāsyam*, becoming a servant.**

Places to visit on this island are Śrī Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's Śrīpāṭa, Vāsudeva Datta's Śrīpāṭa, Śrī Saraṅga Murāri's Śrīpāṭa and Arka-ṭilā.

In *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes:
"After receiving the blessings of Bhīṣmadeva at Bhīṣma-ṭilā I will weep and proceed towards Modadrumadvīpa. Modadruma is non-different from Śrī Bhāṇḍīravana of Vraja. There all animals and birds are transcendental. These birds constantly chant the holy name of Śrī Gaurahari and Sītā-Rāma, sitting on the branches of beautiful trees.

jahnudvīpam samāsādya
dṛṣṭvā jahnu-tapovanam
modadrume rāma-līlāṁ
smaran gauraḥ mumoda ha

"ŚRĪ GAURASUNDARA VISITED THE ĀŚRAMA OF JAHNU MUNI IN JAHNUDVĪPA. THE LORD WAS HAPPY, REMEMBERING THE PASTIMES OF ŚRĪ RĀMACANDRA IN MODADRUMADVĪPA."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4. 46)

In Bhāṇḍīravana there are many banyan trees, mercifully providing shade, beautifying the area and blocking the sun. When will the pastimes of Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifest to my eyes? While roaming and enjoying the beauty of the forest I will suddenly see the hermitage of Śrī Rāmacandra. I will see Lord Rāmacandra in His saffron cloth, along with Śrī Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā-devī by His side. Upon seeing that most attractive form of the Lord, I will fall unconscious in the forest. Symptoms of *premā* will manifest on my body and I will no longer be able to speak. I will just drink the beauty of that form to the full satisfaction of my eyes. Being merciful upon me, Śrī Lakṣmaṇa, the younger brother of Lord Rāmacandra, will come to me slowly and put His lotus feet upon my head. He will give me some fruits and say, 'Dear son! Please take these fruits. We are now living in the forest and these fruits are Our only wealth with which to treat our guests.' Thus the pastime will end and Their Lordships will disappear. In separation I will weep and eat the fruits. Will I ever see that *nava-dūrvā-dala* form (greenish like fresh grass) again?

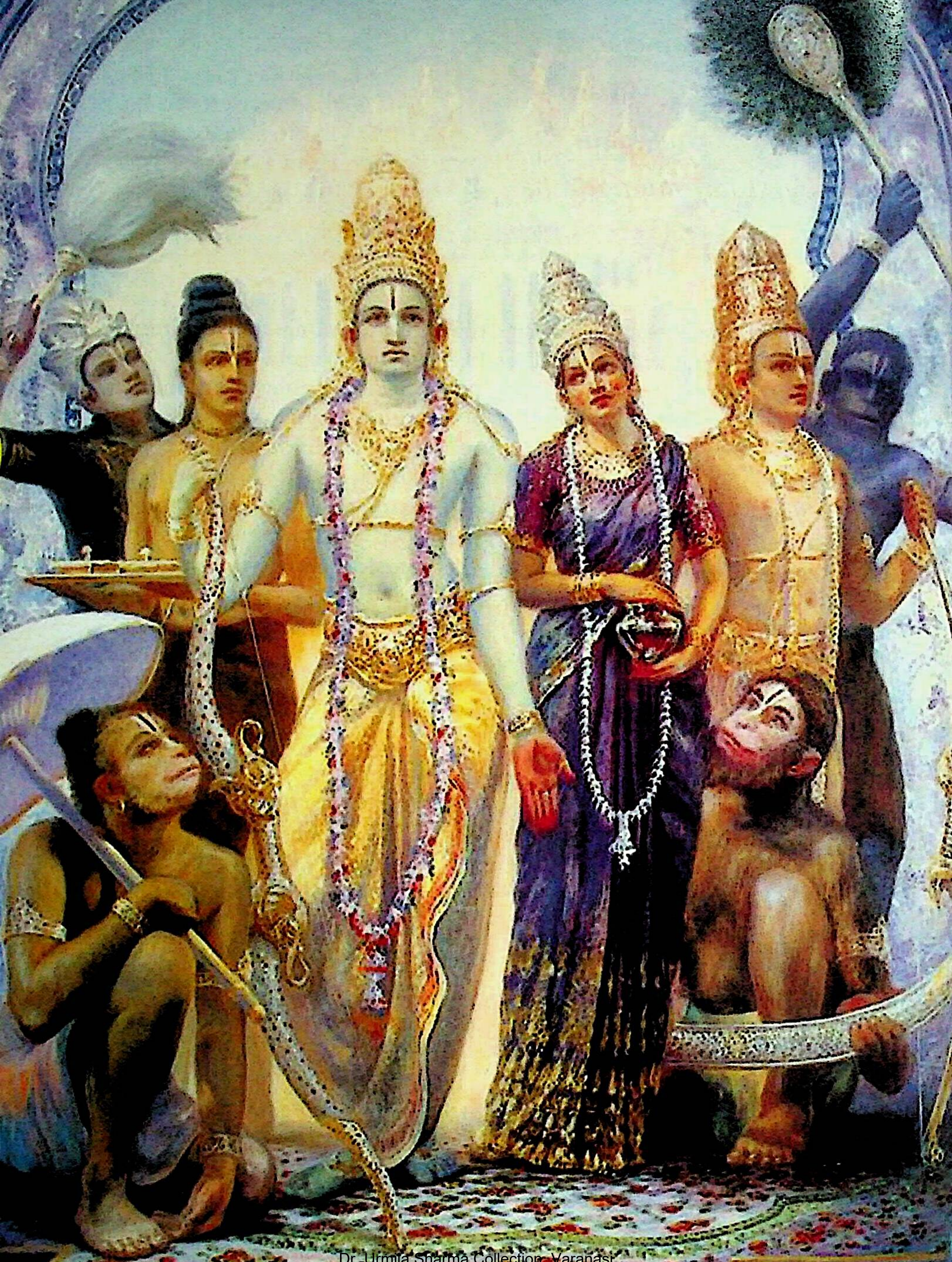
Aha, that Bhāṇḍīravana is the land of spiritual gems. My heart cries ceaselessly, leaving that forest. There Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed many pastimes on the pretext of herding the cows. And in the same forest Gauracandra becomes intoxicated while performing *saṅkīrtana* along with His devotees."

LORD RĀMACANDRA VISITED MODADRUMADVĪPA

Modadrumadvīpa is known as Māmgāchi. Lord Nityānanda went to Māmgāchi village along with all the devotees.

Lord Nityānanda said, "This Modadrumadvīpa is non-different from Ayodhyā. During the previous *kalpa* when Lord Rāma went to live in the forest, He came to this place along with Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā-devī. They built a cottage under a great banyan tree and stayed there happily for a few days. Upon seeing the effulgence

Lord Rāmacandra



of Navadvīpa Śrī Raghunandana Rāmacandra smiled. He looked very beautiful in His *nava- dūrvā-dala-śyāma* form. Rājīva-locana (the lotus-eyed Lord) was holding a bow and arrows and was dressed like an ascetic *brahmacārī* with matted locks on His head. Everyone's mind was attracted just by seeing Him. When Sītā-devī saw the smiling face of Lord Rāmacandra, She asked, 'What is the cause of Your smiling?' Lord Rāmacandra replied, 'O Sītā, daughter of King Janaka! Please listen to this very confidential story. In the future when the most blessed Kali-yuga comes, I will appear here in Nadia in a golden yellow form. I will take birth as Gaurāṅga from the womb of Śacī in the house of Jagannātha Miśra, as their son. All those fortunate people who see My childhood pastimes will receive transcendental love. At that time I will enjoy *vidyā-rasa* (the pastime of education). I will reveal the glories of Śrī Nāma (the holy name). After that I will accept the order of *sannyāsa* and go to Nīlācala. My mother will cry, placing her daughter-in-law on her lap.' Hearing this Sītā-devī said, 'O, Rājīva-locana! Why will You make Your mother cry? Why will You accept *sannyāsa* leaving aside Your wife? I do not understand what pleasure You will receive by giving suffering to Your wife.'

Śrī Rāmacandra replied, 'My darling! Although You know everything, You are asking a seemingly ignorant question. One can relish *prema-bhakti* unto Me in two different ways. One can experience the pleasure of *prema-bhakti* in union with Me known as *sambhoga*. And the pleasure My devotees experience by being separated from Me is known as *vipralambha*. My devotees always desire to be united with Me, but by My mercy they also achieve *vipralambha-bhāva*. In *vipralambha*, whatever suffering one undergoes is for Me only. Whatever suffering a devotee goes through in *vipralambha*, due to Me, he accepts with great relish. For at the end of *vipralambha* when *sambhoga* is attained,

My devotee enjoys a million times greater pleasure. In this way separation from Me is also the cause of pleasure, therefore My devotees accept this state of separation.

This has been explained in the *Vedas*. During the time of My *gaurāṅga-avatāra*, mother Kauśalyā will appear as Śacī-devī who is described in the *Vedas* as Aditi. During that time You will serve Me as Viṣṇupriyā. In the future, feeling separation from You, I will worship You in Your golden deity form in Ayodhyā-nagara. In return You will worship My golden *gaurāṅga-mūrti* form in Nadia-nagara. Sītā-devī! This is a very confidential topic. At present this subject will not be revealed to the people in general. This Navadvīpa is very dear to Me. Even other *dhāmas* like Ayodhyā are not equal to this *dhāma*. This Rāma-vaṭa tree, of which We have taken shelter, will disappear from the vision of the people when Kali-yuga begins but will remain here in an invisible form.'"

Lord Nityānanda continued, "In this way Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa stayed here in Modadrumadvīpa for a few days and then went to Daṇḍaka forest to perform Their duty. Here you can see the *kuṭīra* of Lord Rāmacandra."

GUHAKA-RĀJA APPEARED AS SADĀNANDA AND SAW LORD GAURĀṄGA, NON-DIFFERENT FROM ŚRĪ RĀMACANDRA

Lord Nityānanda said, "By the desire of the Lord, Guhaka-rāja, the friend of Rāmacandra, took birth here as the son of a *brāhmaṇa*. His name was Sadānanda Bhaṭṭācārya and he knew nothing except Rāmacandra in the three worlds. On the very day that My Lord Gaurāṅga appeared in Māyāpur, Sadānanda was present in the house of Jagannātha Miśra. At the time of the Lord's appearance all the demigods descended at that place to take *darśana* of the infant form of the Lord. The great *sādhaka*, Vipra Sadānanda, could recognize that the demigods had come to take *darśana* of the baby and thus he understood that his Lord had taken birth. With great curiosity, Sadānanda returned to his house. When he meditated upon his *iṣṭa-deva*, he saw Gaurasundara sitting on the altar, while the demigods including Brahmā were offering *pūjā* to the Lord. Then he again saw Lord Rāmacandra sitting next to Lakṣmaṇa, the abode of Śrī Ananta. On His left side Sītā-devī was seated and *bhakta* Hanumān was positioned in front of Him. By seeing this, Sadānanda realized that Gaurāṅga was none other than his Lord Rāmacandra. With great pleasure Sadānanda Vipra would go regularly to Māyāpur and take *darśana* of Gaurāṅga to his heart's content. He would say, 'I am blessed! I am blessed! My Lord Rāmacandra is present here in front of me in the form of Gaurāṅga.' After some time, when Mahāprabhu started the *saṅkīrtana* pastime, Sadānanda was dancing there, chanting the holy name of Gaurāṅga."

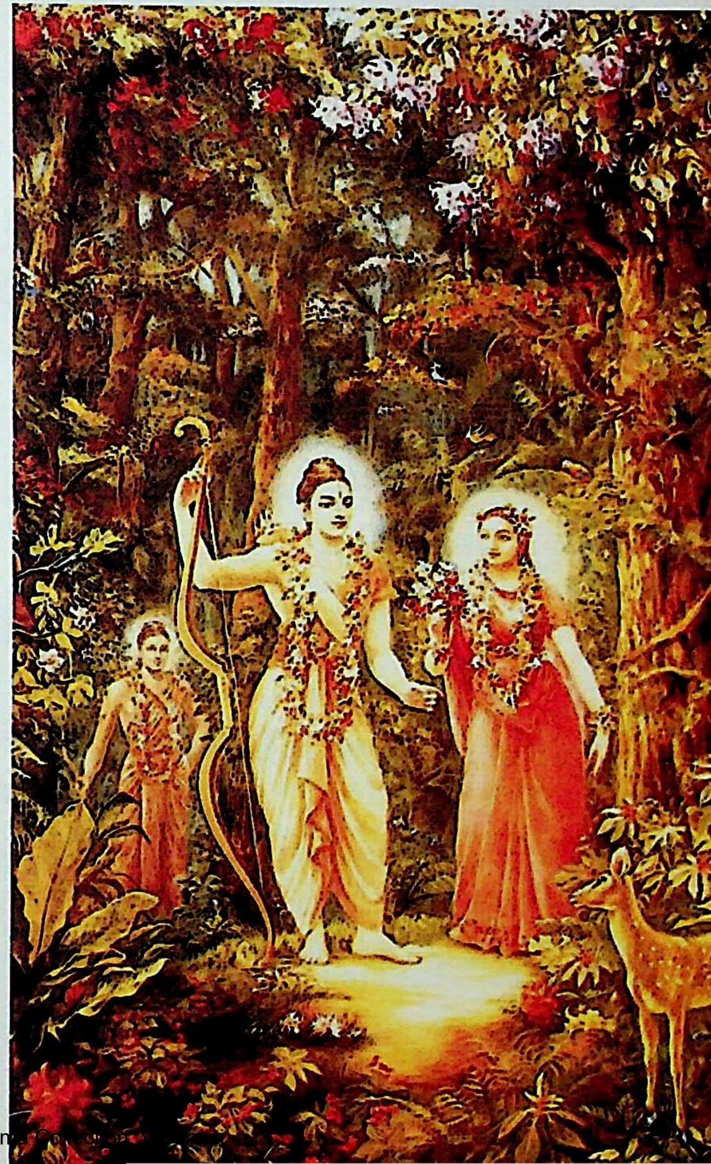
"O, Jīva! Pure devotees see this place as Bhāṇḍīravana." Hearing all these descriptions from Lord Nityānanda, the devotes started to dance and chant, surrounding Nityānanda Prabhu. Symptoms of *aṣṭa-sāttvika-vikāra* manifested in the body of Śrī Jīva. He started shouting, "Ha! Gaurāṅga! Ha! Gaurāṅga!" That day Lord Nityānanda stayed there happily in the house of Nārāyaṇī. This most chaste lady, the mother of Vyāsadeva (Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura), served all the Vaiṣṇavas personally. The next day all the devotees went to Śrī Vaikuṇṭhapura.

SĪTĀ-DEVĪ SEES THE GAURĀṄGA FORM OF LORD RĀMACANDRA

Īśāna Ṭhākura, along with Śrīnivāsa, went to Māugāchi from Jānnagara. Māugāchi is today known as Māmgāchi. Previously this place was also known as Modadrumadvīpa. Īśāna Ṭhākura gives the following explanation as to why this place was called Modadrumadvīpa, according to what he had heard from elderly people.

"Śrī Rāmacandra, the son of Kauśalyā, left Ayodhyā to live in the forest, in order to follow the vow of His father Daśaratha. The Lord gave up His royal dress and with great pleasure traveled from forest to forest along with His wife Jānakī and brother Lakṣmaṇa. His lotus feet were very soft and tender, and to protect Him, whichever path He walked on became very soft so that the Lord would feel no pain. Rain, wind, sunshine, all were very favorable. Thus the Lord performed His very wonderful pastime of traveling, which cannot be compared to anything on this earth planet. While He was traveling, the people of different countries were mad to see His beauty. Wherever the Lord resided, forest or mountain, became a *mahā-tīrtha*.

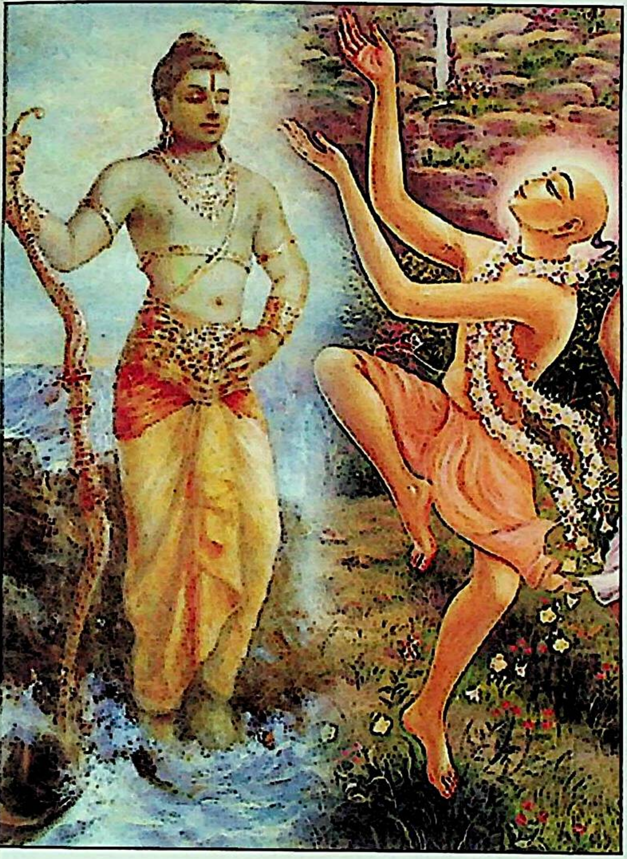
North of this place, the Lord was staying inside a cave in the mountain. Even today people still visit that place, which frees them from all kinds of suffering.



Oh, Śrīnivāsa, while traveling like this, Lord Rāmacandra arrived here. Walking in front was Lord Rāmacandra, in the middle Devī Sītā, and behind Lakṣmaṇa. Everyone was happy to see Them, even the birds and animals. Lord Rāmacandra who is also known as Rājīva-locana, is worshiped by the great demigods like Brahmā. The Lord was looking around and walking like an elephant. He observed Navadvīpa from some distance and started to smile with great curiosity. When Sītā-devī saw Lord Rāmacandra's sweet smiling face She asked Him what was causing His smiling. Lord Rāmacandra replied, 'At the end of Dvāpara-yuga, during the first part of Kali-yuga there will be great enjoyment here in this Navadvīpa-dhāma. I will perform wonderful pastimes here and then take *sannyāsa*.

As I am traveling now, in the same way I will also travel at that time. Therefore I was smiling, remembering all this.'

Hearing the words of Lord Rāmacandra, Jānakī-devī spoke with folded hands, 'Oh, My Lord, please tell Me what kind of pastimes You will have in Nadia?' The Lord replied, 'I will take birth in a *brāhmaṇa* family. During My childhood I will exhibit many restless and playful pastimes. I will accept the most wonderful yellow bodily color which has no comparison. Just by looking at Me the whole world will become intoxicated. I will become very scholarly and the glories of My learning will spread all over the world. I will marry twice. Just as I am offering *piṇḍa* to my father in Gayā now, I will again offer *piṇḍa* in Gayā according to local customs when My father leaves his body. I will increase the happiness of devotees in Navadvīpa by preaching *saṅkīrtana* which is rarely witnessed even by Brahmā. After all this I will pacify all My close associates and take *sannyāsa* to travel to other places.' Hearing this, Jānakī-devī smiled and said, 'If You will take *sannyāsa* then why should You marry? In My opinion this in not proper. Being most merciful how can You be so cruel?' Lord Rāmacandra felt embarrassed, hearing these words from Sītā-devī. Then the Lord said, 'You do not know that I always reside in Navadvīpa.' While talking in this way Lord Rāmacandra reached this place in the company of Jānakī-devī and Lakṣmaṇa. There was a huge banyan tree here and They all stood in the vast shade of that tree. Again Jānakī-devī asked, 'My Lord! What kind of pleasure will You derive from *saṅkīrtana* here in Nadia?' Lord Rāmacandra said, 'First close Your eyes.' Jānakī-devī closed Her eyes and She saw the wonderful pastimes of the Lord in Nadia. There is no limit to chanting, dancing and playing instruments in Nadia and there were innumerable devotees of the Lord gathered, creating a scene that is without comparison. She saw the form of Gaurasundara in the midst of His own associates. The Lord was in His *kiśora* age, adolescence, and appeared like an ocean of *rasa* or mellows. The whole world was overwhelmed by His different styles of dancing. By seeing that most beautiful scene Sītā-devī could not control Herself any more. When She opened Her eyes, She saw Her Lord in front of Her. Lord Rāmacandra smiled and pacified Her. Sumitrā-nandana, Lord Lakṣmaṇa, knows all truths and He also became impatient, desiring to remember the Nadia pastimes of the Lord.



Lord Rāmacandra replied, 'At the end of Dvāpara-yuga, during the first part of Kali-yuga there will be great enjoyment here in this Navadvīpa-dhāma. I will perform wonderful pastimes here and then take *sannyāsa*.

At this place everyone's pleasure (*moda*) was increased and this incident took place under a tree (*druma*). Therefore this island is known as Modadrumadvīpa. Lord Rāmacandra, Sītā-devī and Lakṣmaṇa become very pleased with anyone who comes to visit this Modadrumadvīpa.

O, Śrīnivāsa, this place is known as Rāma-vaṭa. (*Vaṭa* means a banyan tree.) With the arrival of Kali-yuga this tree disappeared. From here Lord Rāmacandra along with Sītā-devī and Lakṣmaṇa went to Utkala (Orissa) with great happiness. When They entered Utkala They were very pleased to see the beauty of the country. On the bank of the river Suvarṇarekhā, Lord Rāma established a Śiva-liṅga by the name of Rāmeśvara. Most fortunate people take *darśana* of that Śiva-liṅga to experience great pleasure. From there Lord Rāmacandra traveled from forest to forest, performing wonderful activities everywhere."

LORD RĀMACANDRA APPEARED AS LORD GAURĀṄGA

Īśāna Ṭhākura continued, "In the Māugāchi village Lord Śrī Gaurasundara exhibited a wonderful pastime which was not visible to other people. There was one *vipra* living at this place who was a great worshiper of Lord Rāmacandra. That *vipra* was present in the house of Jagannātha Miśra on the day Viśvambhara took birth. At that time all the demigods were glorifying the occasion saying '*jaya, jaya*.' This *vipra* was a little puzzled to see so many other *vipras* present there and thought to himself that his Lord must definitely have appeared, 'This Jagannātha Miśra must be King Daśaratha and Śacī-mātā must be Kauśalyā herself, the mother of all creation.'

Stunned, he left the house of Jagannātha Miśra without saying anything to anyone and returned to his own house. While he was meditating upon his worshipable Lord Rāmacandra in His greenish *dūrvā-dala* form, he saw the wonderful golden form of the son of Jagannātha Miśra. While seeing this he fell asleep and in his dream Lord Gauracandra appeared to him. His bodily effulgence defeated even the splendor of a golden mirror. His beautiful face was mocking the beauty of the moon. His arms extended to His knees. His chest was very broad and His long eyes reached to His ears, making the Lord very attractive. He had beautiful, fine, curling hair and His head was decorated with a variety of flower garlands. His neck was surrounded with most wonderful brahminical threads. His body was so beautiful that one cannot compare it to another in this world. The Lord was sitting on a *ratna-siṁhāsana* (jeweled throne) and before Him many demigods led by Brahmā were offering prayers. As the *vipra* was looking upon this scene with great joy, he suddenly saw that Gauracandra had changed to the *nava-dūrvā-dala* form of Lord Rāmacandra. The son of Kauśalyā was pleasing the whole world with His most attractive royal dress. He was smiling, holding a bow and arrows in His hands. On the left of Lord Rāmacandra, Sītā-devī was standing and Lakṣmaṇa was holding an umbrella. In front of Them Hanumān, the son of Vāyu-deva, was sitting with folded hands in a humble posture. Upon witnessing this beautiful form of Lord Rāmacandra, the *vipra* fell to the ground, offering repeated obeisances. Bhakta-vatsala Prabhu, Lord Rāmacandra, is the storehouse of good qualities and He blessed the *vipra* abundantly before disappearing.

Being deprived of the Lord's *darśana*, the *vipra* woke up and became very worried, losing control of his senses. Seeing this situation, the Lord appeared to him again to console him and forbade him to reveal this to anyone. The *vipra* was thus pacified and very pleased. He did not say anything to anyone about his *darśana* of Śrī Gauracandra."

Īśāna Ṭhākura concluded, "This very

old *vipra*, due to being merciful upon me, revealed this fact to me in a solitary place at the time of his death. What can I say about his wonderful qualities? Just see the residence of this *vipra*. By seeing this place one becomes free from the fear of material existence. Here Lord Gauracandra manifested His Rāmacandra pastimes which I have personally seen."

ŚRĪ VṚNDĀVANA DĀSA ṬHĀKURA'S ŚRĪPĀṬA

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, the author of *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, took birth in Modadrumadvīpa. He is an incarnation of Vedavyāsadeva, and was a disciple of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. He had many disciples, including Gopīnātha Brahmacārī, a descendant of Śrī Keśava Bhāratī.

His mother was Nārāyaṇī-devī, the niece of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita. When she was four years old she received the remnants of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's food directly from His own hand. When Lord Kṛṣṇa was a child, He was nursed by a woman named Ambikā who had a younger sister named Kilimbikā. According to *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā*, Kilimbikā was Nārāyaṇī.

ŚRĪ VṚNDĀVANA DĀSA ṬHĀKURA'S ŚRĪPĀṬA

The deities that Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura worshiped, Nitāi- Gaurāṅga and Śrī Jagannātha, are worshiped here in Māmgāchi.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja established the Modadruma Gauḍīya Maṭha in Māmgāchi.

DIRECTIONS: Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura hails from the village of Māmgāchi, which is about one mile from the Purvasthali railway station and not far from the Navadvīpa railway station.

BIRTHPLACE OF MĀLINĪ-DEVĪ

This is where the wife of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, Mālinī-devī, was born. It is near Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura's birthplace. When Lord Caitanya took *sannyāsa* all these devotees left Antardvīpa and came to live in Śrī Modadrumadvīpa.

VĀSUDEVA DATTA'S ŚRĪPĀṬA

Vāsudeva Datta's original temple is close to Sāraṅga Murāri Ṭhākura's Śrīpāṭa but the temple is no longer there. Śrī Madana-Gopāla deities worshiped by Vāsudeva Datta are being worshiped now at Sāraṅga Murāri's Śrīpāṭa. Gauḍīya Maṭha devotees are now managing this temple.

DIRECTIONS FROM MODADRUMA GAUḌĪYA MAṬHA: Leaving the Modadruma Gauḍīya Maṭha, turn right onto the road and walk for a few minutes until you reach the first path on the right. Walk down this path as it turns to the left and then to the right. A short distance ahead on the left, you will see a small pond amongst some overgrown bushes. Opposite that is a small pathway going into a bushy area. Approximately seven meters inside this area is the place where the original temple of Madana Gopāla used to be. This is also the area where Vāsudeva Datta lived. The deity can now be seen in the Sāraṅga Deva Gauḍīya Maṭha.

ŚRĪ SĀRAṄGA MURĀRI ŚRĪPĀṬA

Śrī Sāraṅgadeva performed his *bhajana* in Māmgāchi. He is also known as Śārṅgapāṇi, Śārṅgadhara and Sāraṅga Ṭhākura. He used to worship the Supreme Lord in a secluded place on the bank of the Gaṅgā. There is a temple here that is said to have been established by Sāraṅga Ṭhākura, in front of which is a large Bakula tree. This tree was present during the time of Sāraṅgadeva, it has bark on the outside and is hollow inside. It is said that one day Lord Caitanya noticed that this Bakula tree was dying, so He embraced the tree and it came back to life completely, with green leaves and fragrant flowers.

Sāraṅga Ṭhākura did not want to accept any disciples, but he was repeatedly inspired from within by the Supreme Lord to do so. One morning he decided that he would accept the first person that he saw as a disciple. When he went to take bath in the Gaṅgā, a dead boy's body was floating by and he touched it with his feet. This dead body immediately came back to life and Sāraṅga Ṭhākura accepted him as his disciple. The parents of the boy wanted their son to come back home, but the boy wanted to stay and serve his *guru*, Śrī Sāraṅga Ṭhākura. This boy's name was Murāri and this *śrīpāṭa* is known as Sāraṅga Murāri Śrīpāṭa. The deity of Śrī Gopīnātha who was worshiped by Sāraṅga Ṭhākura is still worshiped here. The *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* describes that the identity of Sāraṅga Ṭhākura in *kṛṣṇa-līlā* is the *gopī* named Nāndīmukhī.

ŚRĪ SĀRAṄGA MURĀRI ŚRĪPĀṬA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

DIRECTIONS: Return to the road, turn right and walk for a couple of minutes. There will be a pathway on one side of the road and a lake on the opposite side. The pathway is the entrance for the temple and the lake is what was left behind by the Gaṅgā River which used to flow here during Lord Caitanya's time.

PRESIDING DEITIES: On the right side are Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha, originaly worshiped by Sāraṅga Ṭhākura

Urmila Sha

ARKA-ṬILĀ

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:
"After crossing the Virajā River and leaving behind Brāhmaṇa-nagara I will climb upon Arka-ṭilā. There I will worship Śrī Gaurahari solitarily with great attention.

Arkadeva (the sungod), being merciful upon me, will appear in front of me with his reddish complexion, wearing saffron-colored cloth, his whole body smeared with sandalwood and tears flowing from his eyes while he chants the holy name of Gaurahari.

He will tell me, 'My dear son! You are a devotee of Lord Gaurahari. Therefore I have appeared in front of you. We are servants of the lotus feet of Lord Gaurāṅga. We love the servants of the servants of Lord Gaurahari. By my blessings you will develop devotion unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You will be empowered to reside in the *dhāma* and chant the holy name of the Lord. Please always come to me chanting the nectarine holy name and thus give me pleasure.' I will offer obeisance at the lotus feet of Sūryadeva and proceed to Mahatpura-dhāma."

Navadvīpa-maṇḍala Development Trust has acquired the land at Arka-ṭilā. We hope that very soon this place will be developed and devotees will be able to live there and perform *bhajana*.

VAIKUṆṬHAPURA

vaikuṇṭha-pura-madhye tu
dṛṣṭvā niḥśreyasaṁ vanam
brahmāṇīṁ viraja-pāre
gatavān śrī-mahatpuram

"The Lord took *darśana* of Niḥśreyasavana in Vaikuṇṭhapura and Brahmāṇīnagara on the bank of the Virajā and then went to Śrī Mahatpura." (*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4. 47)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:
"From Modadrumadvīpa I will slowly go to Śrī Vaikuṇṭhapura where I will

see the Niḥśreyasa forest filled with abundant opulence. At that place, Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of *paravyoma* (Vaikuṇṭha), who is worshiped by all the demigods, resides along with His three energies eternally. Even if my Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is endowed with the highest sweetness, as Īśvara He is also the storehouse of all opulence. Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is never bereft of opulence, but this opulence does not manifest to His pure devotees. Out of His supreme mercy, that Lord of all lords, hiding His opulence, manifested His Gaurāṅga form to please the heart of Nārada Muni. Upon seeing that form I will drown in the ocean of bliss and cry loudly."

NĀRADA MUNI'S VISIT TO VAIKUṆṬHAPURA

The following is a description of Vaikuṇṭhapura from the *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*.

Nityānanda Prabhu said, "This place, which is situated in one corner of Navadvīpa-dhāma in the shape of an eight-petalled lotus, is undoubtedly Vaikuṇṭhapurī.

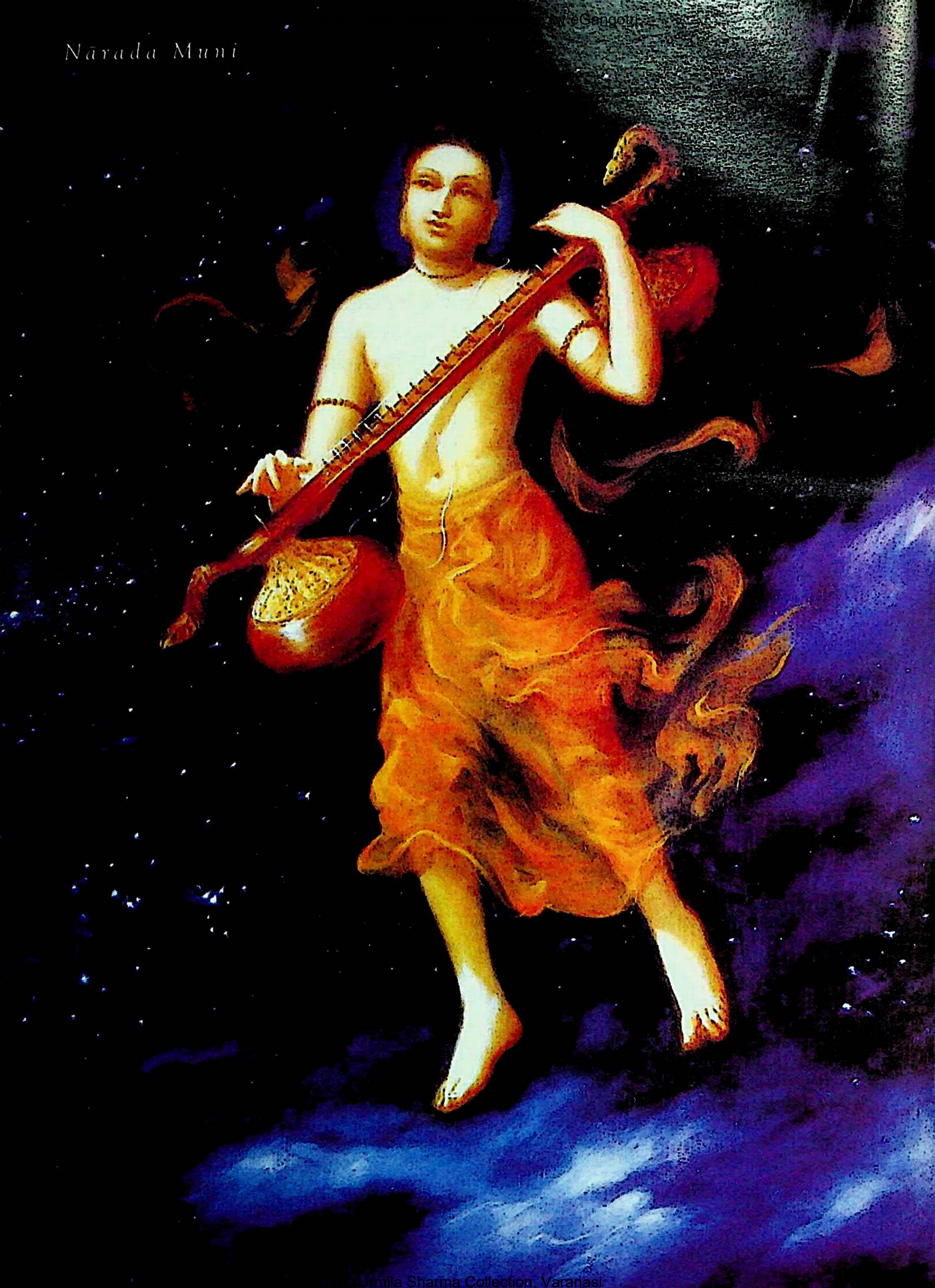
Lord Nārāyaṇa resides in this Śrī Vaikuṇṭha, which is situated in the spiritual sky, *paravyoma*. Vaikuṇṭha lies beyond the Virajā River. *Māyā* or illusion has no influence upon this place. Here Lord Nārāyaṇa is served by Śrī-devī and Bhū-devī, and the *brahmajyoti* is the effulgence of this spiritual land. With their material vision, people cannot understand the transcendental nature of this place.

In this Nārāyaṇa-dhāma Nārada Muni once saw the Lord with his transcendental vision. Nārada saw the Nārāyaṇa form turn into the form of Gaurasundara. After seeing this, Nārada Muni stayed here for some time."

This event has been described in the *Bhakti-ratnākara* more elaborately.

Śrī Īśāna Ṭhākura along with Śrīnivāsa and Narottama went to Vaikuṇṭhapura from Māugāchi. He said, "This place is known as Vaikuṇṭhapura. Now I will tell you the glories of this place and why it is called Vaikunṭhapura.

One day Nārada Muni came from Vaikuṇṭha to Kailāsa Mountain to meet with Lord Śiva. At that time Lord Śiva was sitting on a skin *āsana*, surrounded by his associates, and was describing the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa with his five mouths. As soon as Nārada Muni saw Śrī Maheśa from a distance, he fell on the ground to offer obeisances in great ecstasy. Lord Trilocana embraced Nārada and asked, 'Where have you come from?' Nārada replied with great happiness, 'I have just taken *darśana* of Lord Nārāyaṇa. Vaikuṇṭha-nātha was discussing Navadvīpa with His associates. In Bhārata-varṣa there is a



Nārada Muni

most beautiful place called Navadvīpa and the Lord was very happy to go there along with His associates. After seeing this scene, I have come here. I do not know what blissful pastimes will take place in Nadia.' After hearing the words of Nārada Muni, Deva Maheśvara smiled and manifested the symptoms of love over his entire body. He was looking at Nārada Muni and shaking his head. He was roaring while exhibiting various fantastic bodily postures. Śrī Kailāsa-girīśvara, Lord Śiva, was so overwhelmed that tears were flowing from his eyes and soaking all of his white-colored body. Nārada Muni could understand from the actions of Lord Śiva that the time had come for the manifestation of pastimes in Navadvīpa. After witnessing this event Nārada Muni left the Kailāsa Mountain.

Nārada then traveled to this place and saw the beauty of Navadvīpa-dhāma and so thought to himself, 'This Navadvīpa-dhāma is the source of all *dhāmas*. All the Lords of all the *dhāmas* are eternally engaged in their pastimes here in Navadvīpa. I have just come here after seeing Śrī Vaikuṇṭha-nātha Nārāyaṇa. Will I see Śrī Vaikuṇṭha-nātha here again?' As soon as Nārada Muni developed such a desire, he immediately saw Lord Nārāyaṇa along with His associates in Vaikuṇṭha manifest in front of him. Nārada became overwhelmed with the ecstasy of love. He could not stop shedding tears and offered many prayers to Navadvīpa-dhāma. He then went to Dvārakā to take *darśana* of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

NĀRADA MUNI SAW ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA TRANSFORM INTO ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA

Īśāna Ṭhākura continued, "On the arrival of Nārada Muni in Dvārakā, Rukmiṇī-nātha Śrī Kṛṣṇa looked at him in great ecstasy. Śrī Kṛṣṇa satisfied Nārada Muni by receiving him nicely and asked, 'Where have you come from?' Nārada Muni replied, 'I have just come from Navadvīpa.' Having said this, sage Nārada became silent. Understanding the mind of Nārada Muni, the most merciful Śrī Kṛṣṇa transformed Himself into His most attractive Gaurāṅga form. After seeing Lord Gaurāṅga, the moon of Nadia, Nārada Muni could not maintain his composure. Tears started to flow from his eyes and indescribable ecstatic transformations took place on his body. Immediately Nārada Muni saw the Lord's form change from that of Gaurāṅga to the beautiful blue form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Nārada Muni kept that most valuable form of Gaura-Kṛṣṇa hidden within his heart. He constantly meditated upon this most extraordinary beauty with undeviating attention. Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was happy to see the condition of Nārada Muni. After pacifying Nārada and helping him to regain composure, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke softly, 'Go to Kailāsa to meet with Śiva. Inform everyone about My appearance in Navadvīpa. The time has come. There is no need to delay any longer.' Thus, after hearing the sweet words from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Nārada Muni took leave. Very soon he reached the Kailāsa Mountain while chanting the glories of Gaura-Kṛṣṇa and playing his *vīṇā*. He offered his obeisances to Śiva and informed him about everything Śrī Kṛṣṇa had told him. Mahādeva was very much overwhelmed to hear the news from Nārada Muni. He put Nārada on his lap and started to cry in happiness. One cannot describe the amount of happiness manifested on Kailāsa Mountain after the news was announced."

LORD GAURĀṄGA MANIFESTED TO NĀRADA MUNI IN VAIKUṆṬHAPURA

Īśāna Ṭhākura said, "Nārada Muni, after declaring the news everywhere, finally came back to this place in Navadvīpa. The sage was thinking to himself, 'I wonder if I will be so fortunate to see the same thing here that I witnessed in Dvārakā?' Thinking like this he looked all around and immediately saw the opulence of Dvārakā in Nadia. He saw that Gauracandra was sitting on a *ratna-siṁhāsana*. With the beauty of His form He was attracting even Kandarpa. It is not possible to describe how Nārada Muni felt after seeing that beautiful form of the Lord. The Lord spoke to Nārada Muni with very sweet words,

'Now you will see My manifested pastimes here in Nadia. Your desire for removing the suffering of all living entities will be fulfilled in all respects.'

After saying this and giving His blessings, Lord Śrī Gaurahari vanished.

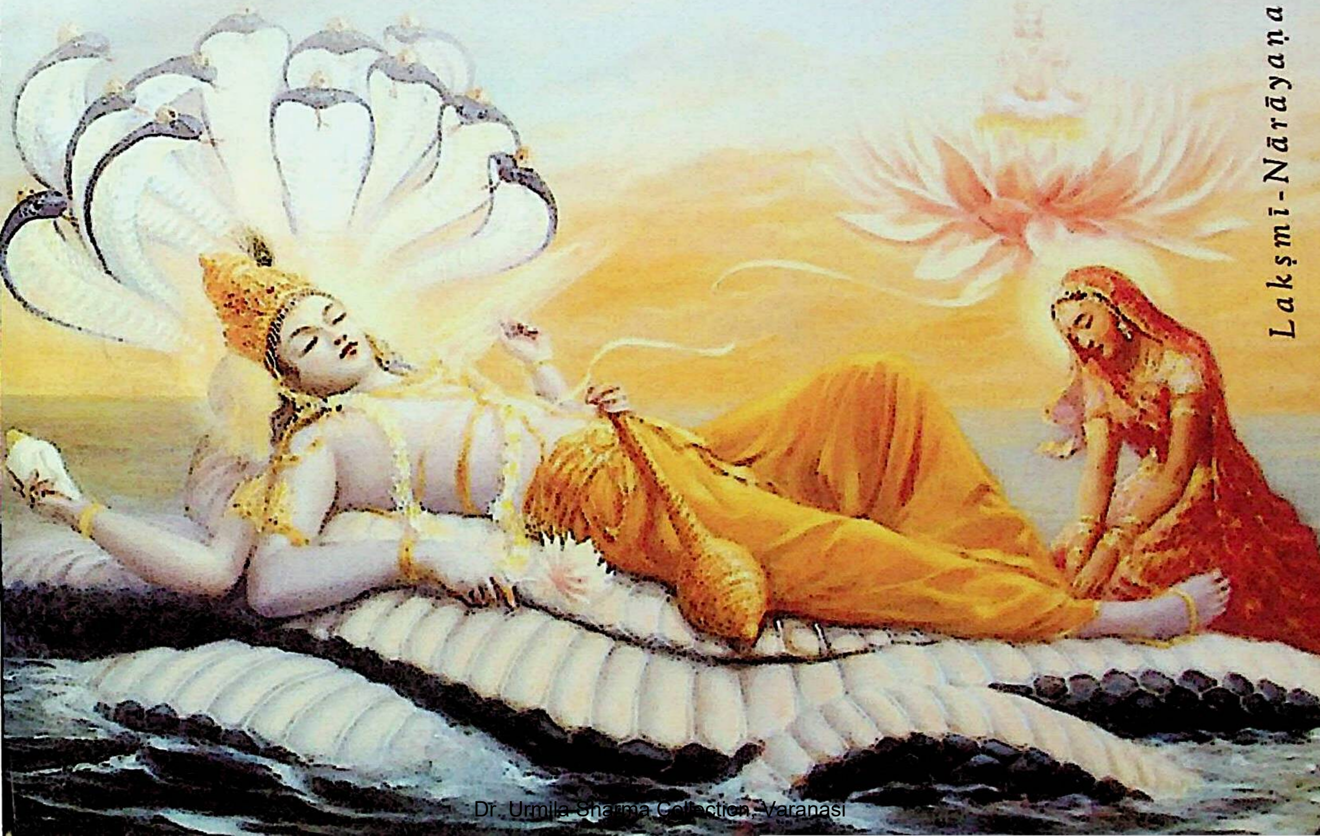
Being deprived of the Lord's *darśana*, Nārada Muni felt great separation. He spent a few days here at this Nārāyaṇa-pīṭha and then left for traveling. Because this is the place where Nārada Muni received *darśana* of Nārāyaṇa it is known as Nārāyaṇa-pīṭha. All the opulence of Vaikuṇṭha manifests here, therefore this place is also famous as Śrī Vaikuṇṭhapura."

LORD GAURĀṄGA REVEALED HIMSELF TO THE OLD VIPRA, A GREAT DEVOTEE OF ŚRĪ LAKṢMĪ-NĀRĀYAṆA

The following is an excerpt from the *Bhakti-ratnākara*.

Long ago, when Nārada Muni visited Vaikuṇṭhapura and had *darśana* of Lord Gaurāṅga (as previously described), there was a great, qualified king who was ruling this country. He introduced the worship of Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa. After some time this village became almost hidden, then slowly people started to live here again.

At that time one old *vipra* was living here. He used to perform worship with the Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa *mantra*. He had unalloyed undeviating love for Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. Occasionally he would visit Vallabha Miśra's house and serve Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa in a private place. That *vipra* had developed great affection for Vallabha Miśra, who in turn respected the *vipra* as his *guru*. The *vipra* was present at the marriage ceremony of Lord Gaurāṅga and Lakṣmīpriyā. Upon seeing this Lakṣmī-Viśvambhara form of the Lord, he started dancing and chanting "Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa!" His eyes were filled with tears of bliss and his body was exhibiting symptoms of ecstasy in the form of *pulaka* (hairs standing on end). After some time by the desire of the Lord, the *vipra* was pacified and



Lakṣmī-Nārāyaṇa

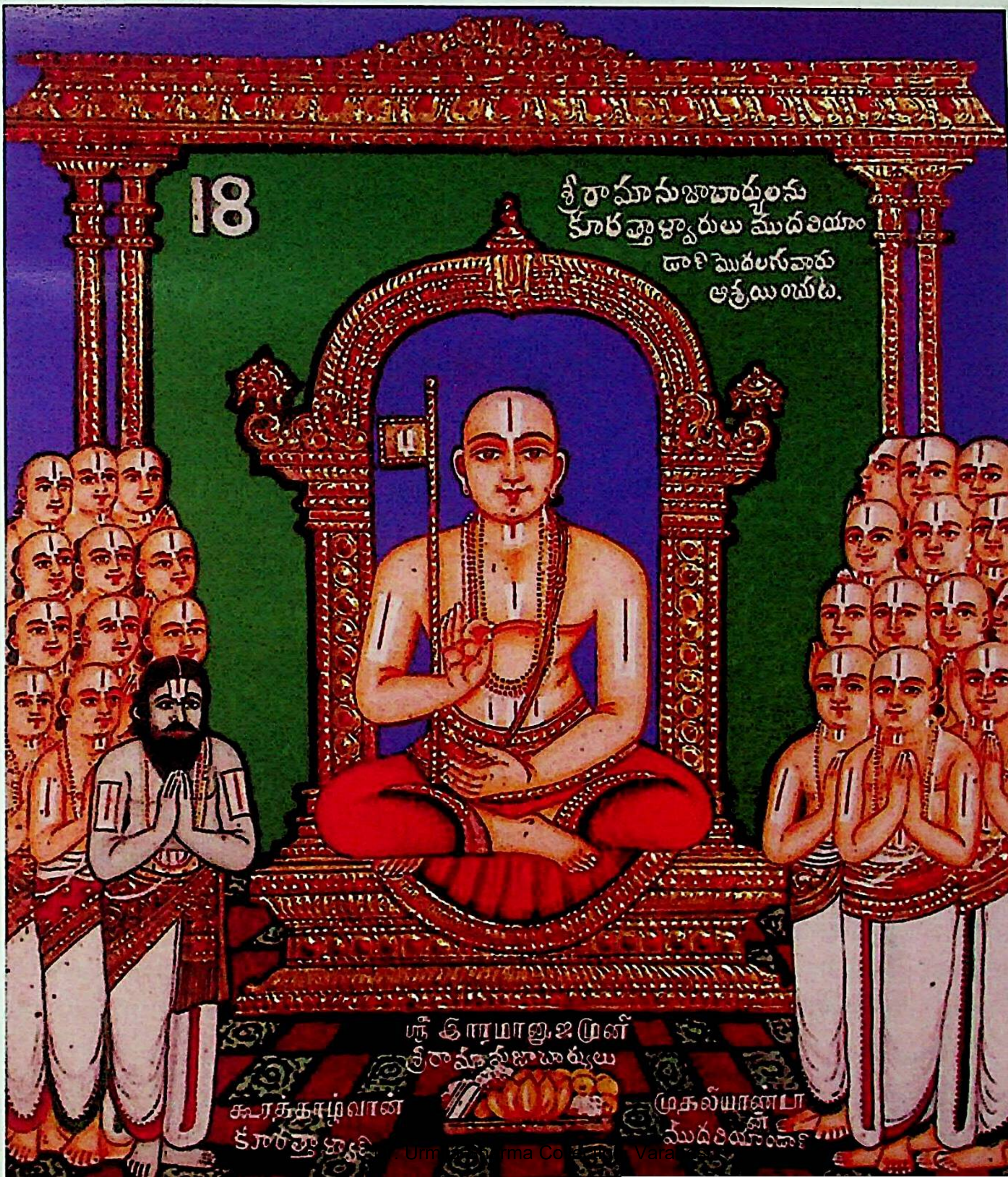
became calm. He stayed there that night and the next day went back to his simple cottage under a tree. The *vipra* entered his humble *kuṭīra* and started crying profusely, feeling great ecstasy of love as he remembered Lakṣmī and Gauracandra in the house of Vallabha Miśra. The *vipra* was convinced that Lord Nārāyaṇa had come in the form of Gaurāṅga, the son of Śacī-devī. "The daughter of Vallabha Miśra is Lakṣmī-devī Herself. Both Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa have appeared on this earth. Would the Lord of my life Gauracandra who is Lakṣmī-prāṇa-nātha, bless a fallen and ill-minded person like me?" While the *vipra* was praying to the Lord in many ways, the Lord Himself appeared in his *kuṭīra*, manifesting the most opulent Vaikuṇṭha pastimes. Śrī Gaurāṅga in His most attractive form was sitting on a *ratna-siṁhāsana* along with Lakṣmī-devī. His auspicious body was decorated with a variety of ornaments. There was no comparison to the beauty of Their forms. The *vipra* was surprised to see Gauracandra immediately transform into the four-handed form of Lord Nārāyaṇa. The *vipra* fell at the lotus feet of the Lord and offered many prayers. The Lord, who is controlled by His devotee, smiled and said, "Life after life you are My dear servant. You are fully qualified to see My pastimes but please do not reveal what you have seen now. Whatever you wish your desire will always be fulfilled." The Lord placed His lotus feet on the head of the *vipra*. Inconceivable pastimes manifested in this *vipra*'s *kuṭīra*. Śacī-kumāra along with His associates performed many pastimes here in Vaikuṇṭhapura.

RĀMĀNUJĀCĀRYA'S VISIT TO NAVADVĪPA

(an excerpt from the *Bhakti-ratnākara*)

Once, Ācārya Lakṣmaṇa (Rāmānujācārya) came to Jagannātha Purī. He pleased Lord Jagannātha by offering many prayers to Him. Lord Jagannātha mercifully appeared in front of him and told him, "You should go to take *darśana* of Navadvīpa-dhāma. Very soon I will appear in Nadia-nagara in the house of Jagannātha Miśra. Navadvīpa is very dear to Me. The entire spiritual sky exists in one portion of this Navadvīpa-dhāma. You are My eternal servant and great devotee so you will definitely see Navadvīpa-dhāma. Your disciples are engaged in My service in the mood of servitude. Let them all stay here in Nīlācala while you go to Navadvīpa alone. O, Rāmānuja! If a person does not take *darśana* of Navadvīpa-dhāma, his human life is useless. Śrī Raṅga-kṣetra and Śrī Veṅkaṭācala are plenary expansions of Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma. For this reason you must just go to Navadvīpa and take *darśana* of Śrī Gaurāṅga. You have come to this earth to preach about *bhakti*. Let your life be worthwhile (*sārthaka*), or meaningful, by the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga. After seeing Navadvīpa go to Kūrma-sthāna. There you will meet with your disciples."

Hearing all this from Lord Jagannātha, Rāmānujācārya replied with folded hands, "O, Lord ! By Your mercy only have I heard *gaura-kathā*, but I do not know which *tattva* this Gauracandra is." Lord Jagannātha mercifully explained, "Everybody knows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of Goloka. Nārāyaṇa is the *vilāsa-mūrti* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That Kṛṣṇa is the *para-tattva*. His abode is Vṛndāvana. That Kṛṣṇa in His complete form is eternally manifested as Śrī Gaurahari. That Vṛndāvana-dhāma is also Navadvīpa-dhāma. In Navadvīpa I reside eternally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శ్రీరామానుజాచార్యులను
కూరత్తాళ్వారులు ముదలియాం
డాన్ మొదలగువారు
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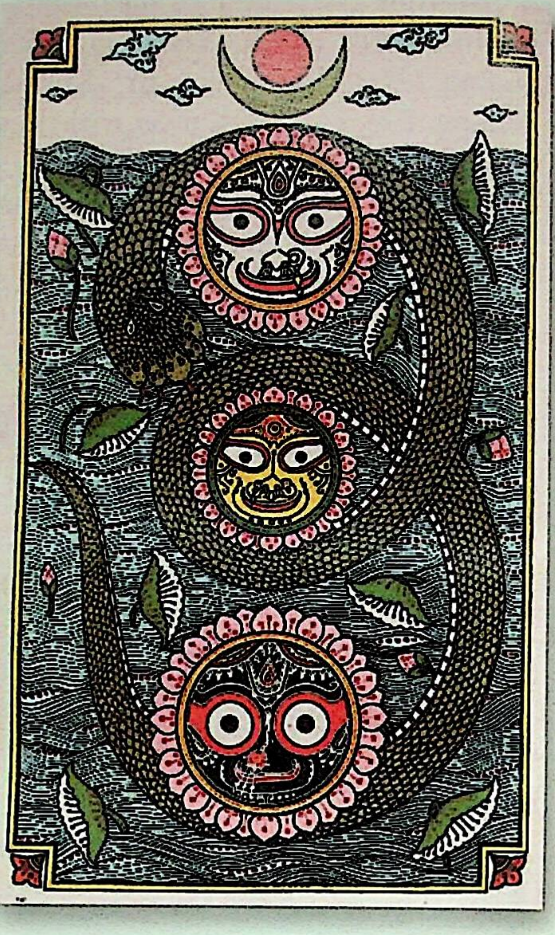
கூரத்தாழ்வான்
முதலியாண்டான்
ముదలియాండాన్

Rāmānujācārya

as Gaurasundara. Navadvīpa is the greatest *dhāma* in this entire cosmic manifestation. By My mercy this *dhāma* is present in Bhū-maṇḍala. All scriptures mention that *māyā* does not touch this *dhāma*. There is no trace of *māyā* there. If one thinks that these *dhāmas* in this material world are inferior because they manifest in Bhū-maṇḍala, one's *bhakti* will reduce day by day. By My inconceivable potency the transcendental *dhāmas* exist even in this illusory material realm.

Scripture is unaware of some truths which are beyond argument. Only My devotees can understand these truths by My mercy."



By hearing the words of Lord Jagannātha, Śrī Rāmānuja became very restless and eager. He said, "O, my Lord! Your pastimes are very wonderful. *Veda-śāstra* does not know Your opulence! O, Lord Jagannātha! Why does *śāstra* not mention the pastimes of Lord Gaurāṅga more elaborately? Only if I search the *śruti* and the *Purāṇas* very deeply, I occasionally get a *sphūrti* (revelation) of *gaura-tattva* in my heart. Now by Your order I am free from all doubts and *gaura-līlā-rasa* has arisen within my heart. If You order me then I will go to Navadvīpa and preach the pastimes of Gaurāṅga in the three worlds. I will reveal the secret truths of the scriptures and inform everyone. Let me make everyone in these three worlds a devotee of Śrī Gaurāṅga."

By seeing the enthusiasm of Rāmānuja, Lord Jagannātha said, "Rāmānuja! Do not speak like this. *Gaura-līlā* is very confidential. Please keep it hidden. Only when these pastimes become unmanifest, will everyone be informed about their glories. Now preach about My *dāsya-rasa*, but within yourself worship Gaurāṅga constantly." Having been instructed by the Lord, Rāmānuja secretly came to Navadvīpa.

Feeling apprehensive that *gaura-līlā* may be exposed to people in general prematurely, Viṣvaksena took Rāmānuja to *paravyoma*, Śrī Vaikuṇṭhapura. Rāmānuja was very pleased to see this place. The merciful Paravyoma-pati Nārāyaṇa, served by Śrī-devī and Bhū-devī, gave His *darśana* to Rāmānuja. Rāmānuja felt blessed to see his *iṣṭa-deva*, the worshipable Lord Nārāyaṇa. But after just a moment Rāmānuja saw the molten-gold-colored form of the Lord as the son of Jagannātha Miśra, who was very attractive. By seeing that most gorgeous form of the Lord, Rāmānuja fainted. Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu placed His lotus feet on the head of Rāmānuja, who offered prayers with his transcendental knowledge, requesting the Lord to bless him with *darśana* of His confidential Nadia pastimes. Saying this Rāmānuja Swami cried in ecstasy, saying, "I will not go anywhere, I cannot leave Nadia." Śrī Gaurahari mercifully said, "O, Keśava-nandana! Your desire will definitely be fulfilled. When I manifest My Nadia pastimes you will take birth in Navadvīpa." Śrī Gaurahari vanished and Rāmānuja then departed. After some days he reached Kūrma-kṣetra, where he met with all his disciples. In South India Rāmānuja preached *dāsya-rasa-bhakti* while meditating on Navadvīpa and Śrī Gaurāṅga within his heart. By the mercy of Śrī Gaurāṅga, Rāmānuja appeared as Śrī Ananta in this eternal Navadvīpa-dhāma. He went to Vallabha Ācārya's house, where he saw the marriage of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and Lakṣmīpriyā. This is the place of Śrī Ananta. The kings of that time introduced Nārāyaṇa-sevā at this *pīṭha-sthāna*, while many devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa were living here on the border of the River Virajā. Devotees experience immense happiness by visiting this place.

MAHATPURA

vaikuṇṭha-pura-madhye tu
dṛṣṭvā niḥśreyasaṁ vanam
brahmāṇīṁ viraja-pāre
gatavān śrī-mahatpuram
sthānaṁ ca pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ
kāmya-nāma-vanaṁ śubham
dṛṣṭvā pañchavaṭīñ cātra
śrī-śaṅkara-puram yayau

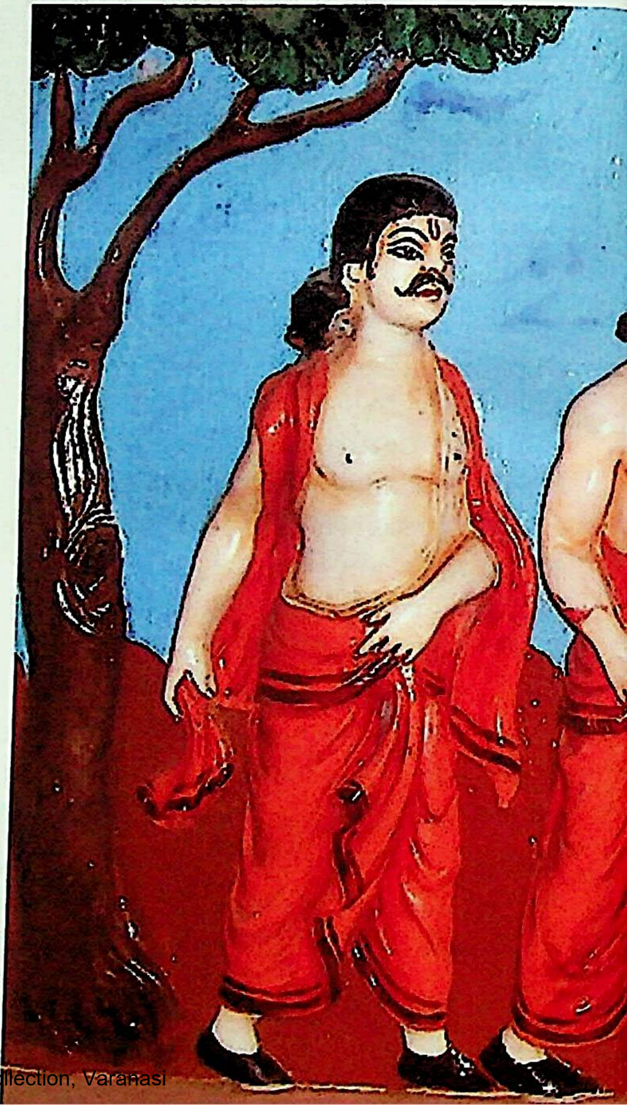
"The Lord took *darśana* of Niḥśreyasavana in Vaikuṇṭhapura and Brahmāṇīnagara on the bank of the Virajā and then went to Śrī Mahatpura. Then He visited Kāmyavana, the most pious place of the five Pāṇḍavas, and Pañcavaṭī. He then traveled to Śrī Śaṅkarapura."

(*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya,* *Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa,* 4. 47-48)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives the following description in *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*:

"I will offer obeisance at the lotus feet of Sūryadeva and proceed to Mahatpura. This Mahatpura is non-different from Kāmyavana of Vraja where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed so many pastimes. At this Mahatpura, devotees of Lord Gaurāṅga chant the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa making a tumultuous sound. The five Pāṇḍavas, headed by Yudhiṣṭhira, along with Draupadī, spent a few days in this forest. They brought Vyāsadeva here to hear the *Gaura Purāṇa* from him. Then all of them engaged in worshiping Lord Gaurahari very intensely. Even now devotees see the assembly of Yudhiṣṭhira along with *ṛṣis* like Bhauma, Śuka, Devala, Cyavana and Garga Muni. They all cry, immersed in *gaura-kathā* sitting under the tree. When shall I go to that assembly and take my seat, offering my obeisances from afar. I will breathe heavily in ecstasy, hearing the history of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu delivering all the atheists. After some time I will no longer see that assembly, and roll on the ground, crying as I chant the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga.

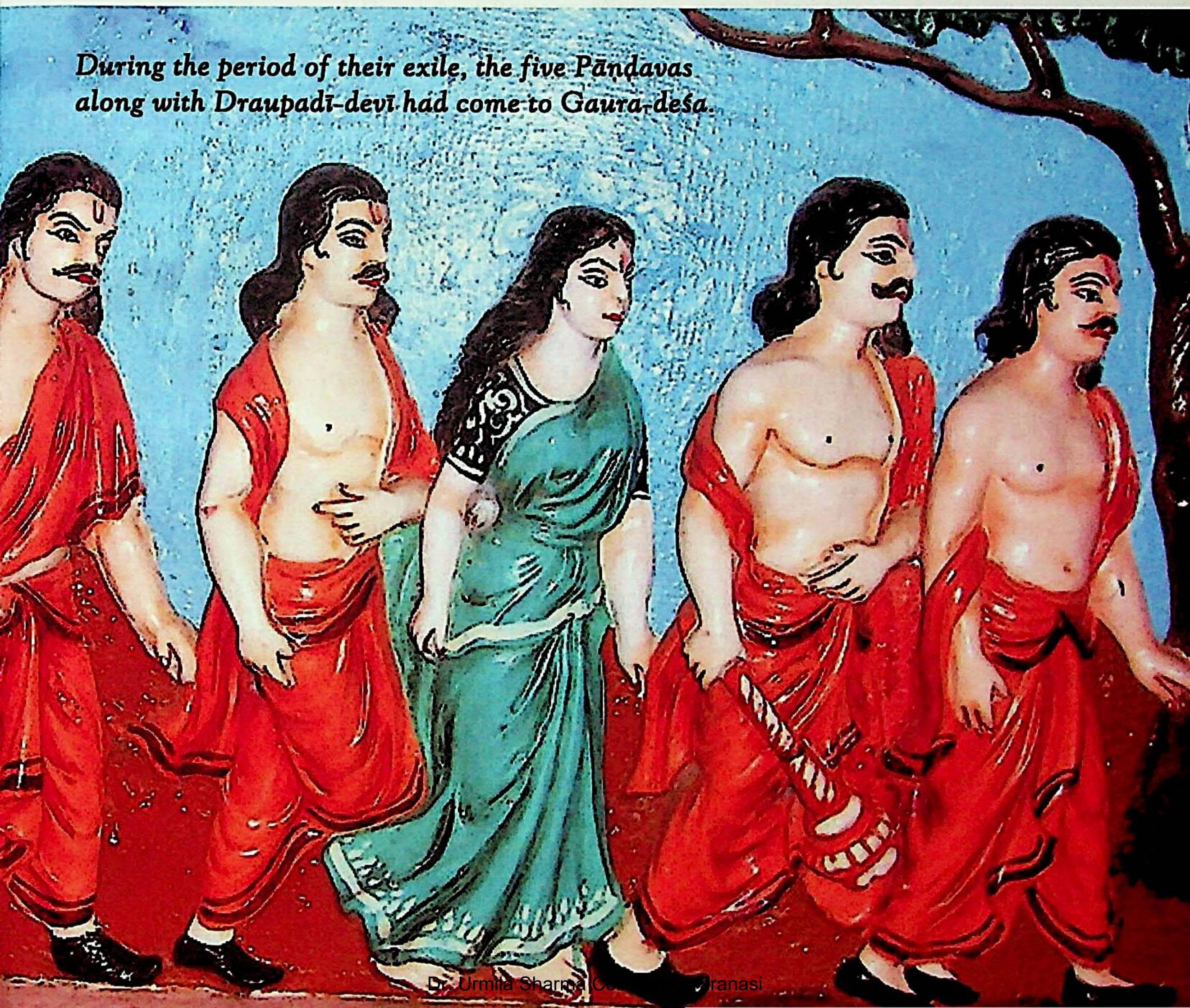
During midday when I am very hungry, I will collect fruits to eat. At this time Draupadī-devī, the wife of the Pāṇḍavas, will come to me carrying rice and spinach in her hand. She will tell me, 'My dear son! As you are my guest, please accept these few handfuls of the rice *prasāda* of Lord Gaurāṅga.' My tongue will be blessed to relish this wonderful rice and spinach offered to Lord Gaurāṅga. Any living entity who receives the blessings of *mahā-prasāda* will definitely attain *kṛṣṇa-bhakti.* Let me be blessed in this way so that I can be free from the bondage of *māyā*."



LORD GAURĀṄGA MANIFESTS TO THE PAÑCA-PĀṆḌAVAS AT MAHATPURA

While describing the magnificent topics of Vaikuṇṭhapura, Lord Nityānanda and the other devotees reached Mahatpura. Lord Nityānanda said, "This place is Kāmyavana. Please take *darśana* of this place with utmost devotion. Previously *pañca- vaṭa* (five banyan trees) were growing here, but by the desire of the Lord all these trees have disappeared.

Now this place is known as Mātāpura. But according to scripture it was previously known as Mahatpura. During the period of their exile, the five Pāṇḍavas along with Draupadī-devī had come to Gaura-deśa. While they were staying in the village of Ekacakra, Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja saw the glories of Nadia in a dream and became very anxious. The next day, with great hankering to visit Navadvīpa-dhāma, all of them happily came to this place. By seeing the beauty of the *dhāma*, the Pāṇḍavas



During the period of their exile, the five Pāṇḍavas along with Draupadī-devī had come to Gaura-deśa.

Dr. Urmila Sharma Co aranasi

praised the good fortune of the inhabitants of Gaura-maṇḍala-bhūmi. They stayed here for a few days and killed many demons and *rākṣasas*. All of you please look, this is Yudhiṣṭhira-ṭilā and here you can see Draupadī-kuṇḍa. Understanding the glories of this place King Yudhiṣṭhira stayed here peacefully for a few days.

One day in his dream he saw the transcendental form of Lord Gaurāṅga.

That incredible form of the Lord was dazzling all directions.

While smiling Lord Gaurāṅga said, 'Behold My most confidential form. I as Kṛṣṇa, son of Nanda, always stay at your house as your friend. This Navadvīpa-dhāma is the best among all the *dhāmas*. This *dhāma* manifests in Kali-yuga to dispel the darkness. All of you are My eternal servants and will take birth during My manifested pastimes. I will stay with you constantly in Puruṣottama-kṣetra which is situated in Utkala-deśa on the coast. Now please go from here to Orissa and purify that land to reduce the suffering of the living entities.'

Yudhiṣṭhira described this dream to his brothers and then all of them, along with mother Kuntī, proceeded to Orissa. It was very painful for them to leave Navadvīpa, but they had to follow the order of the Lord."

LORD GAURACANDRA MANIFESTS TO MADHVĀCĀRYA

(a passage from the *Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Parikramā-khaṇḍa*)

At this place (Mahatpura), Madhvācārya and his disciples stayed for a few days as *dhāma-vāsīs*. Śrī Gaurasundara mercifully revealed His most attractive form to Madhvācārya in a dream. Gauracandra smilingly said, "Everyone knows that you are My eternal servant. When I appear in Navadvīpa-dhāma, I will accept your *sampradāya*. For the time being, travel everywhere and root out the philosophy of *māyāvāda* which has been described in *asat-śāstras*. Manifest the glories of *śrī-mūrti* and I will spread your pure verdict." Having spoken these words, Lord Gaurasundara disappeared.

Madhva Muni then woke from his sleep and fainted. He started weeping and said, "Shall I again see that most beautiful, molten-gold form of the Lord?"

An ethereal sound, *daiva-vāṇī*, manifested in the clear sky saying, "Worship Me secretly and come to Me." Madhvācārya became pacified by hearing this and proceeded to defeat all the *māyāvādīs*.

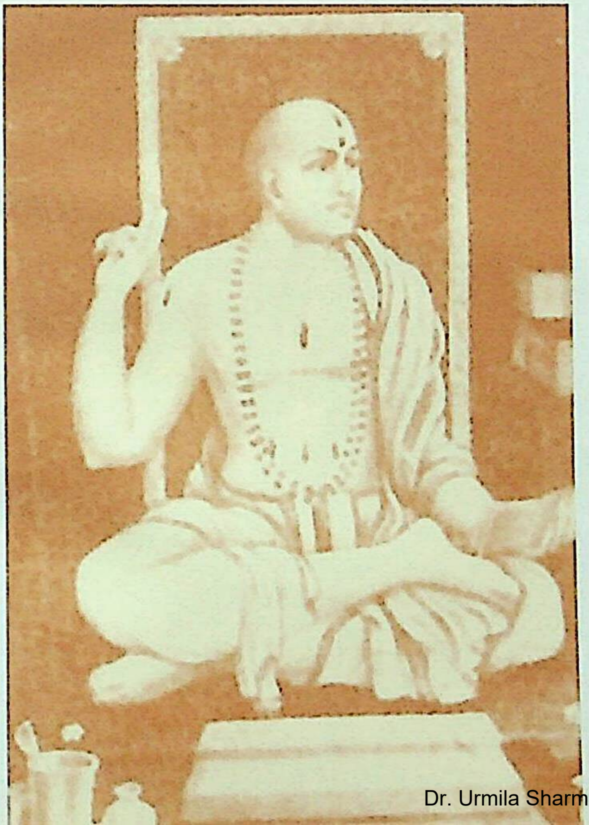
Why this place was known as Mahatpura

The reason behind the name Mahatpura is explained in the *Bhakti-ratnākara*. Īśāna Ṭhākura said, "This place is known as Mātāpura. Previously it was called Mahatpura. I will explain to you the story of why people called this place Mahatpura.

By the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas were sent to reside in the forest. During this time they experienced much enjoyment, traveling to many countries. Those places that were not visited by the Pāṇḍavas were considered by intelligent people to be "Pāṇḍava-varjita-deśa", lands deprived of the Pāṇḍavas' visit. The many great qualities of the Pāṇḍavas are described in the *Purāṇas*. They had killed many demons and *rākṣasas* at different places while traveling and they eventually found themselves in Gaura-deśa. They chose to settle in Rāḍhadeśa, in a village called Ekacakra. Bhīmasena became very famous by killing many demons who were disturbing the people of the Ekacakra area, and the Pāṇḍavas, along with Draupadī, engaged in unrivalled welfare work for humanity in general. They lived a solitary existence in Ekacakra, always remembering Śrī Balarāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra. By seeing the beauty of Ekacakra, most learned Yudhiṣṭhira thought to himself, 'I have visited many places. But never have I seen a place like this. No other place has attracted our minds in this way. I can therefore understand that this must be a pastime place of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I can only understand the glory of this place if Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa will reveal it to me.' Yudhiṣṭhira remained fixed in such meditation throughout the night and eventually, by the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he fell asleep just as the night was ending.

In his dream, the son of Rohiṇī, Lord Balarāma, appeared to him in His most incomparably attractive form. Lord Balarāma, while smiling affectionately, told King Yudhiṣṭhira, 'Some distance from here is a place called Navadvīpa which is surrounded by many rivers and looks very beautiful. During the first *sandhyā* of Kali-yuga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will appear there in a *brāhmaṇa*

Madhvācārya



family. He will be disguised to magnify His pleasure. His dear associates will take birth at various locations. I will appear here in Ekacakra by His desire. This Ekacakra village is the place of My pastimes.' Having said this, Lord Baladeva disappeared. King Yudhiṣṭhira was very surprised by his dream and saw Ekacakra village as non-different from Śvetadvīpa. While looking at the beauty of the land, he woke up. In the early morning he informed all of his brothers about his dream.

From Ekacakra the Pāṇḍavas came to Navadvīpa. By seeing the beauty of Navadvīpa they were extremely happy and King Yudhiṣṭhira wondered, 'Will I see something in my dream as I did in Ekacakra village?' and became anxious to have a similar experience. Then, by the desire of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he fell asleep. In his dream both brothers, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma, appeared in Their most gorgeous forms. Śrī Kṛṣṇa spoke to King Yudhiṣṭhira with a broad smile, 'This Nadia city is My birthplace. I will appear here in Kali-yuga along with My associates, wildly absorbed in *saṅkīrtana*, and engage the world in this sublime process. I will enjoy with all of you on the seashore. (The Pāṇḍavas would appear in Purī as five brothers, one of whom was Rāmānanda Rāya.) I will

give all of you the rarest nectar of love of Vraja.' Speaking in this way and understanding the mood of the king, Śrī Kṛṣṇa transformed Himself into the most beautiful Lord Gaurāṅga. The great emperor Yudhiṣṭhira lost all control witnessing this form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Balarāma. With great ecstasy he began shedding tears and fell at the lotus feet of both the brothers. The Lords embraced the king and left only after pacifying him. King Yudhiṣṭhira became very much perplexed when he awoke to see it was already morning time. He then informed his brothers about this wonderful dream and stayed there for a few days.

Yudhiṣṭhira Mahārāja was the greatest among all "*mahats*" or great people. Because he was staying here, this place is known as "Mahatpura". Previously there were five banyan trees here offering their cooling shade. There was also one *ṭilā* here known as Yudhiṣṭhira-ṭilā. By the desire of the Lord, all those places are now hidden. Thus the Pāṇḍavas, who were staying here incognito, went to Orissa by the order of the Lord.

They resided in Utkala, near Purī, inside a beautiful garden. There they got information that the deity of Śrī Mādhava was being held by some *rākṣasa*. Bhīma proceeded to kill the demon by hitting him with his club (*gadā*) and established the worship of Śrī Mādhava among the people in general. Till now these most fortunate people are engaged in the service of Śrī Mādhava.

In this Mahatpura, Śrī Gaurāṅga along with His associates manifested many wonderful pastimes with great joy. If anyone is fortunate enough to take *darśana* of Mahatpura even once, he will easily obtain the priceless wealth of *bhakti*. If anyone so much as takes *darśana* of a person who has developed an interest in the subject matter of Mahatpura, he will become free from all negative thoughts.

Directions: Turn left onto the road when leaving the Sāraṅga Murāri temple. Take the first right turning and proceed for approximately 3-4 kilometers. The site is located on the left of the road beside the Gaṅgā River. It is a backwater of the Gaṅgā River that used to flow here. This area is located on the northwestern boundary of Modadrumadvīpa. Although presently known as Mātāpura, the scriptures call this place Mahatpura.

Śrī Rudradvīpa

This island represents ***sakhyam***, being a friend.

In his *Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes: "After honoring the *prasāda* given by Draupadī at Mahatpura, when will I come to Rudradvīpa? Kailāsa, the abode of Śiva, is just the effulgence of this Rudradvīpa, which shines within Navadvīpa.

At this place the eleven Rudras, headed by Nīla-lohita, dance and become stunned with *gaura-premā*. Durvāsā Muni set up his *āśrama* here and gave up his practice of *yoga* to worship Gaurāṅga's lotus feet.

Other *yogīs* headed by Aṣṭavakra and Dattātreya, as well as Pañca-mukha Śiva, gave up the monistic philosophy and engaged in meditation on the lotus feet of Gaurāṅga. No longer do they desire to merge with the effulgence of the Lord.

When will I wander in the forest and come to the place of the *śiva-liṅga*? Sitting there, I will meditate on Gaurāṅga's lotus feet, and then see a beautiful goddess nearby.

When she notices me, I will pay my respects and ask, 'Mother, what is your name?' With tears in her eyes, she will reply, 'Listen son, my sorrow is impossible to comprehend.

There are five types of liberation, and I have been given the name of Sāyujya, or Nirvāṇa. My four sisters, Sālokya, Sārūpya, Sāmīpya, and Sārṣṭi, have gone to Vaikuṇṭhapura leaving me here embarrassed. By the mercy of Śiva, Dattātreya and other sages gave me their earnest attention for some time, but finally they gave me up and people say they took up residence

sthānaṁ ca pāṇḍu-putrāṇāṁ
kāmya-nāma-vanaṁ śubham
dṛṣṭvā pañcavaṭīñ cātra
śrī-śaṅkara-puraṁ yayau

"THE LORD THEN VISITED KĀMYAVANA, THE MOST PIOUS PLACE OF THE FIVE PĀṆḌAVAS, AND PAÑCAVAṬĪ. HE THEN TRAVELED TO ŚRĪ ŚAṄKARAPURA."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 48)

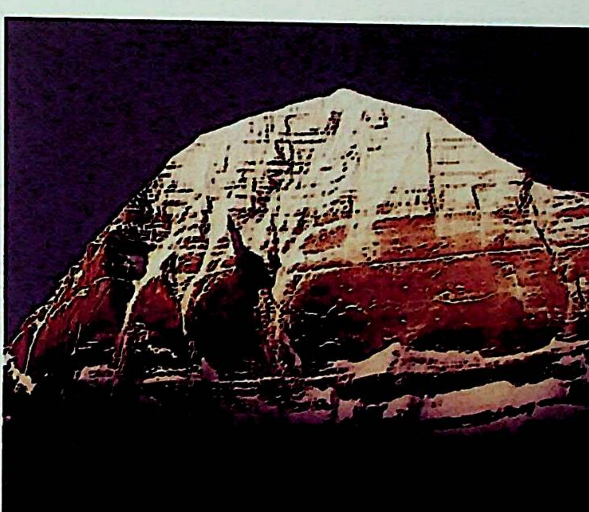
in Rudradvīpa. I am now looking for them hopelessly. Where and when will I find them? Gaurāṅga has liberated everyone but is merciless to me. Therefore I will find a place to give up my life. That place will be called Nidaya [Merciless].'

Just hearing her name, Sāyujya, my heart will tremble as if in fear of the witch Pūtanā. Due to overwhelming fear I will close my eyes and drop to the ground. Then a great person will touch me, and I will rise and see before me the figure of Śiva, dancing and crying out, 'O merciful son of Śacī, give mercy to all living entities. Drive away all fear!'

I will fall at Mahādeva's feet and pray for my own purification. He will mercifully place his feet on my head and give me the essence of all teaching.

'Listen, devotion to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the essence; striving for *jñāna*, *karma*, *yoga*, and *mukti* is useless. By my mercy you will conquer *māyā* and quickly attain the shade of Gaura's lotus feet. To the south, behold Śrī Pulina, so attractive. This is Vṛndāvana within Navadvīpa. Go there to witness Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and soon you will attain Rādhā's lotus feet.'

After instructing me, Śiva will disappear. I will bow down and then continue on, crying all the while. After viewing Śrī Pulina for some time, I will fall unconscious to the earth with my voice choked and a gurgling sound coming from my throat."



***Kailāsa**, the abode of Śiva, is just the effulgence of this Rudradvīpa, which shines within Navadvīpa.*

WHY IS THIS ISLAND NAMED RUDRADVĪPA?

The village Radupura is situated on the eastern side of the Gaṅgā. Some people also call this place Rudrapura. Rudradvīpa is said to be divided into two portions. One portion is on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā and the other portion is on the western bank. Due to the movement of the Gaṅgā sometimes a portion on the western side of the Gaṅgā moves to the eastern side and vice-versa. Thus the exact location of various places is difficult to ascertain.

Śrī Īśāna Ṭhākura, during his *parikramā* with Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, came to this place and gave the following explanation:

"This place is now known as Rādupura but previously it was called Rudradvīpa. The village of Rādupura has since disappeared and now only some uninhabited land remains. I will now tell you why this place was known as Rudradvīpa.

Śrī Rudradeva was very happy within his heart knowing that Śrī Gauracandra would appear in Nadia. Rudradeva, along with his followers, became mad while describing the glorious qualities of Lord Gaurāṅga. All around him was the sound vibration of drums and various other instruments. Maheśvara was dancing ecstatically with wonderful bodily movements. By the weight of Rudra's every step the earth was shaking.

Who would not become impatient to have darsana of that dance? Who would not dance when Lord Rudra is dancing? From heaven the demigods started to sprinkle flowers. Happiness increased within the hearts of all the demigods, who said, ‘Now all living entities will be free from all kinds of suffering.

Before the appearance of the Lord, Rudradeva is chanting the glories of His birth. This means the Lord will appear in Nadia very soon. Our hearts will be filled with happiness to witness the birth pastimes of the Lord.'

RIGHT / *By the weight of Rudra's every step the earth was shaking*

Speaking in this way, all the demigods in heaven started dancing.

Rudradeva forgot himself while chanting the glories of Lord Gaurāṅga, who therefore became concerned about Rudra's condition. He appeared in front of Rudradeva, invisible to anyone else. The Lord then pacified Mahādeva by saying,

'I will fulfil your desire. I will appear very soon along with My associates.' By hearing the words of the Lord, Rudradeva became peaceful and filled with great happiness.

He offered various prayers, glorifying Lord Gauracandra. Śrī Gaurasundara embraced Rudradeva and then disappeared, leaving him very perturbed due to losing the Lord's *darśana*. After some time, by the mercy of the Lord, Rudradeva again became pacified.

Lord Rudra sits here along with his associates and distributes the nectar of *gaura-kathā*. This place is very pious because Rudradeva had some pastimes here and therefore it is known as Rudradvīpa.

ŚRĪLA ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA IS ORDERED BY LORD GAURĀṄGA TO LEAVE ŚRĪ NAVADVĪPA-DHĀMA

In Rudradvīpa there is a village called Śaṅkarapura, the glories of which Lord Nityānanda describes as follows, "From here you can see Śrī Śaṅkarapura on the bank of the Gaṅgā. When Śaṅkarācārya was busy conquering people in all directions, he came here in order to conquer Navadvīpa. Internally he was a great Vaiṣṇava but externally he was an *advaita-vādī* (follower of monism), the servant of *māyā*. Śaṅkarācārya was the partial expansion of Lord Rudra, who is very powerful, and was expert in spreading Bauddha philosophy in a hidden way. Lord Rudra was performing these activities by the order of the Lord and when he came to Nadia, Śrī Gauracandra appeared to him in a dream. Being merciful upon Śaṅkarācārya, the Lord spoke to him sweetly, 'My dear servant, by My order alone, you are preaching *māyāvāda* philosophy very diligently, but this Navadvīpa-dhāma is very dear to Me and *māyāvāda* has no place here. Here Vṛddha Śiva, along with Prauḍhā Māyā, preaches about the speculated *Āgama Purāṇas*. They cheat those people who are inimical to My devotees. Everyone becomes My devotee here. There is no opportunity to preach this wicked philosophy in My dhāma. You had better go somewhere else and not trouble the inhabitants of Navadvīpa.'

Śaṅkarapura
PRACTICAL GUIDE

Thus Śaṅkarācārya, being a great devotee at heart and understanding the *navadvīpa-tattva* through his dream, left for other countries.

This Rudradvīpa is a place for all the Rudras (various forms of Lord Śiva), who gather to sing the glories of Lord Gaurāṅga. Śrī Nīla-lohita, the chief of the Rudras, dances here with great jubilation every day and the demigods happily shower flowers from the sky in appreciation.

DIRECTIONS: Proceed down the road beside the Śrīdhāma Māyāpur Post Office. Take the first road on the right. Proceed four to five kilometers walking or by cycle (vehicles cannot go) until you come to a T-junction where you need to walk up a steep embankment. Turn left here and then cross the bridge on your right. Continue walking on the main path for approximately another two kilometers. It is the second village. There is nothing to mark this place but this is the general area.

ŚRĪ VIṢṆUSVĀMĪ BLESSED BY ŚRĪ RUDRADEVA AND ŚRĪ GAURĀṄGA MAHĀPRABHU

Lord Nityānanda said, "One time Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī went traveling as a Digvijayī, conquering all directions. When he reached Rudradvīpa, he stayed there for the night along with his disciples, who were dancing, chanting the holy name, 'Hari Hari!' Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī was reading the *śruti* and *smṛti* scriptures. Śrī Nīla-lohita (Lord Śiva) was pleased to see this display of *bhakti* and decided to grant him his *darśana*. When Śrī Rudradeva arrived in the assembly of Vaiṣṇavas, Viṣṇu Svāmī was surprised to see him and he respectfully offered prayers with folded hands. Lord Rudra mercifully said,

'All you Vaisnavas are dear to me, I am very pleased to see all of you discussing bhakti. You may ask from me any boon, out of my mercy I will fulfil your desire. I can give anything to Vaisnavas.'

Viṣṇu Svāmī offered prostrated obeisances and in great ecstasy he asked, 'Oh my Lord! Please give us the boon that all of us may achieve perfection in the *bhakti-sampradāya*.' With great pleasure Lord Rudra granted the wish of Viṣṇu Svāmī and accepted his *sampradāya* as his own. Since then the Viṣṇu Svāmī-sampradāya has been famous as the Śrī Rudra-sampradāya.

By the mercy of Rudradeva, Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī resides at this place, worshiping Śrī Gauracandra in order to achieve pure love or *premā*. Once Śrī Gaurāṅga appeared in his dream and said, 'You have received the blessings of My devotee, Rudradeva. You are blessed to receive the wealth of *bhakti* in Navadvīpa. Now you should go and preach the philosophy of *śuddhādvaita*. During My manifested pastime you will appear as Śrī Vallabha Bhaṭṭa and after having My *darśana* in Śrī-kṣetra you will attain perfection in your *sampradāya* by going to Mahāvana.'" Lord Nityānanda continued, saying, "O, Jīva! Śrī Vallabha is now in Gokula. If you go there you can receive his *darśana*."

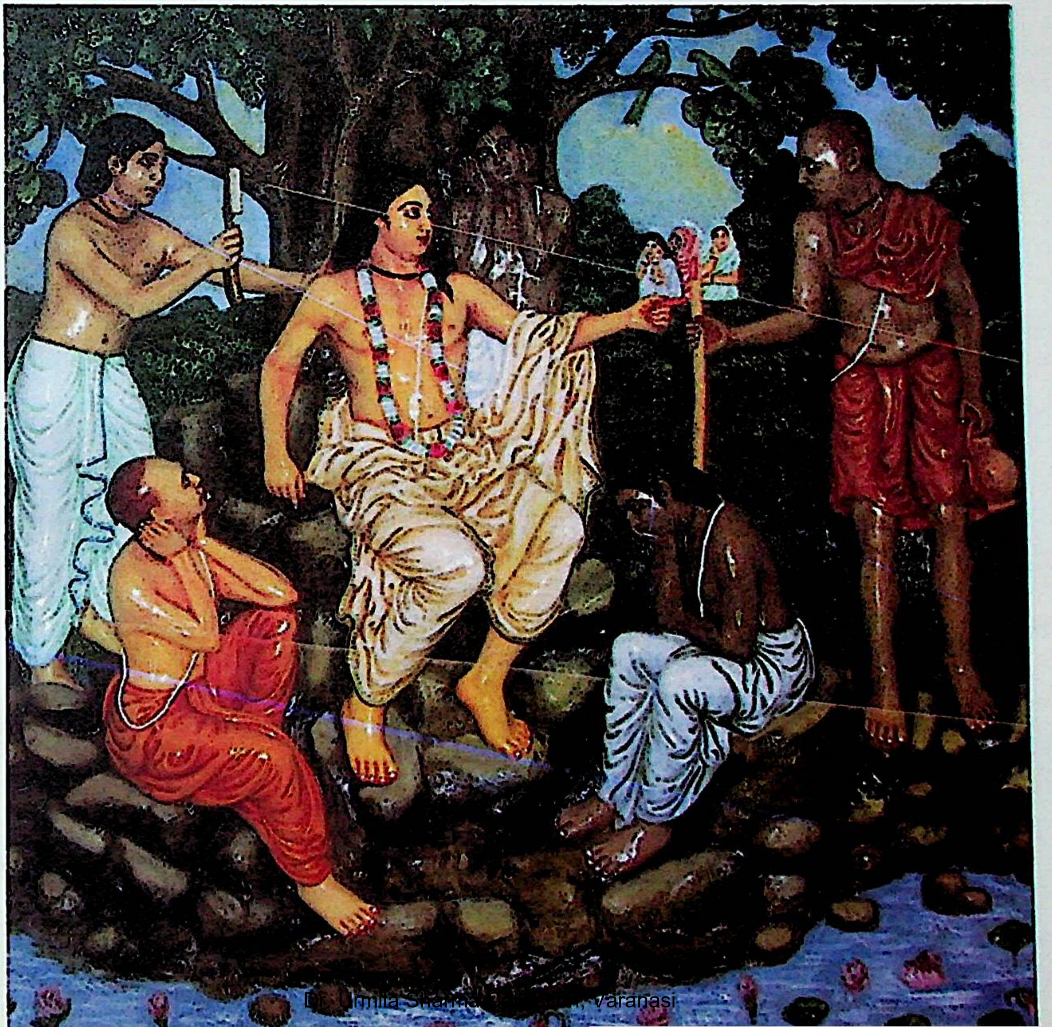
RIGHT Lord Caitanya crossed the River Gaṅgā on His way to Katwa to take sannyāsa. He took sannyāsa at the end of January in 1510, just before His 25th birthday. Wall relief (Mayapur)

NIDAYA GHĀṬA

This is where Lord Caitanya crossed the River Gaṅgā on His way to Katwa to take *sannyāsa*. He took *sannyāsa* at the end of January in 1510, just before His 25th birthday. His *sannyāsa* name was Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. On the day that He decided to enter the *sannyāsa* order, He informed only Nityānanda Prabhu, Gadādhara Paṇḍita, Śacī-mātā, Candraśekhara and Mukunda.

The Lord got up during the night and prepared to leave home for the last time. As He approached the gate, Mother Śacī was standing there like a statue. She was in total shock and her eyes were full of tears. She was unable to say anything to prevent Him from leaving. The Lord circumambulated Mother Śacī three times and offered her His obeisance. He took some dust from her feet, then left home forever.

After leaving home the Lord swam across the Gaṅgā and went to Katwa. *Nidaya* means "without mercy". The residents of Navadvīpa accused the Lord of being without mercy for leaving them.



Dr. Urmila Sharma [illegible], Varanasi

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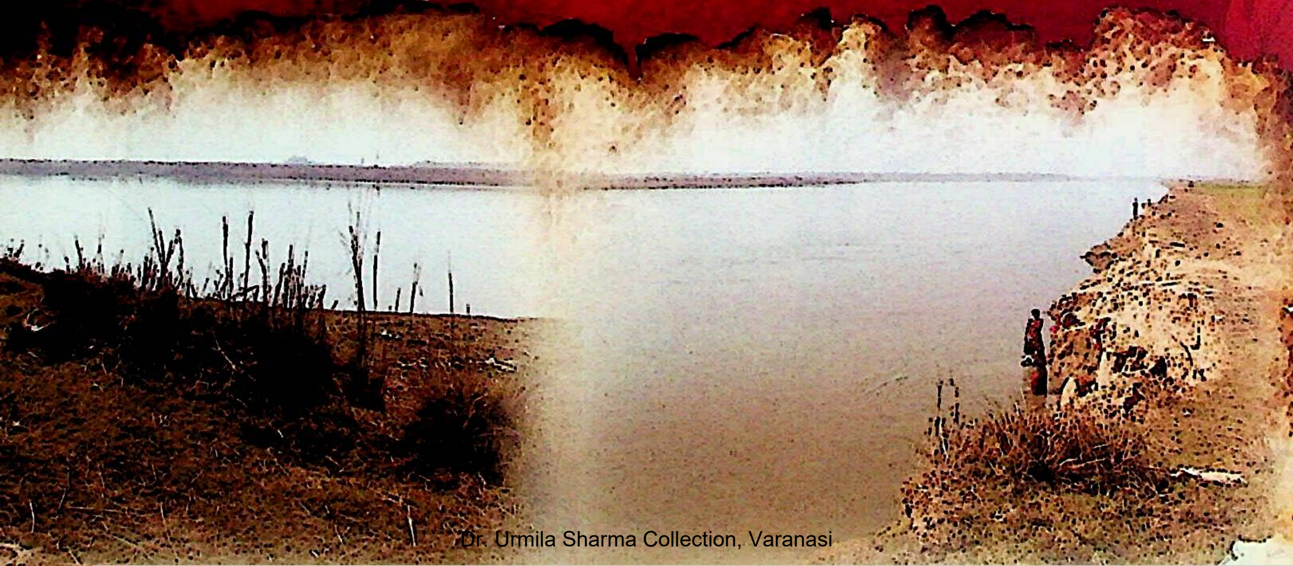
NIDAYA GHATA

PRACTICAL GUIDE

Nidaya-ghāṭa is on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā. There is a temple here established by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, which houses a deity of Lord Caitanya that he personally worshiped when he stayed in a straw hut in Māyāpur.

DIRECTIONS: Follow the directions for Śaṅkarapura. Instead of turning right to go over the bridge, continue walking straight ahead. You will walk along a path on the bank of a river (a backwater of the Gaṅgā River). On the left you will see some bamboo growing and a path. The Rudradvīpa Gauḍīya Maṭha temple is at the end of this path. To go to the Nidaya-ghāṭa, do not take the path on the left leading to the temple but proceed along the bank of the river. Take the first turning on the left, follow this path through the village and continue approximately one and a half kilometers until you come to the Gaṅgā River. Nidaya-ghāṭa is now under the waters of Gaṅgā-devī. Another way to come here is by boat from Navadvīpa-ghāṭa to here and then walk one and a half kilometers to the Rudradvīpa Gauḍīya Maṭha.



ŚRĪ PULINA, RASA-MAṆḌALA, DHĪRA-SAMĪRA

bhāgīrathī-taṭe pūrve
māyāpuraṁ tu gokulam

tasyās taṭe paścime hi
vṛndāvanaṁ vidur budhāḥ

tatra rāsa-sthalī divyā
pulinaṁ bālukāmayaṁ

rāsa-sthalī-paścime tu
puṇyaṁ dhīra-samīrakam

yad yad vṛndāvane devi
tat tat tatra na saṁśayaḥ

"Intelligent people say that Māyāpura, identical to Gokula, lies on the eastern bank of the Gaṅgā. On its western bank lies Vṛndāvana. In this Vṛndāvana there is a place called Rāsa-sthalī. On the west side of the Rāsa-sthalī is the holy place Dhīra-samīra where the wind blows very gently. That place is covered by pure sands and has a lovely cooling effect. Oh, Devī! There is no doubt that whatever is manifest in Vṛndāvana also exists here."

(Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya, Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa 4. 25-26)

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA ṬHĀKURA DESCRIBES IN HIS NAVADVĪPA-BHĀVA-TARAṄGA,

"After giving his instructions, Lord Śiva will disappear. I will bow down and then continue on, crying all the while. After viewing Śrī Pulina for some time, I will fall unconscious to the earth with my voice choked and a gurgling sound coming from my throat.

While devoid of external consciousness, in a dreamlike state of *samādhi*, a wondrous figure will appear performing her constitutional service. Suddenly I will recognize that it is I, Kamala-mañjarī, the eternal assistant of Anaṅga-mañjarī, the goddess of my heart.

Anaṅga-mañjarī will introduce me to all her companions, give me the service of preparing comfort for Their Lordships and reveal to me the confidential pastimes of the divine couple.

Near Śrī Pulina is the Rāsa-maṇḍala, where Gopendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by a billion *gopīs*, steals the hearts of all by His dancing with Śrī Rādhā, the predominating goddess of the *rāsa* dance.

Such graceful dancing does not exist within the material world! By great fortune, whoever sees this pastime at once drowns in that nectar. And whoever attains such a transcendental trance will be unable to give up the happiness of that astounding sight!

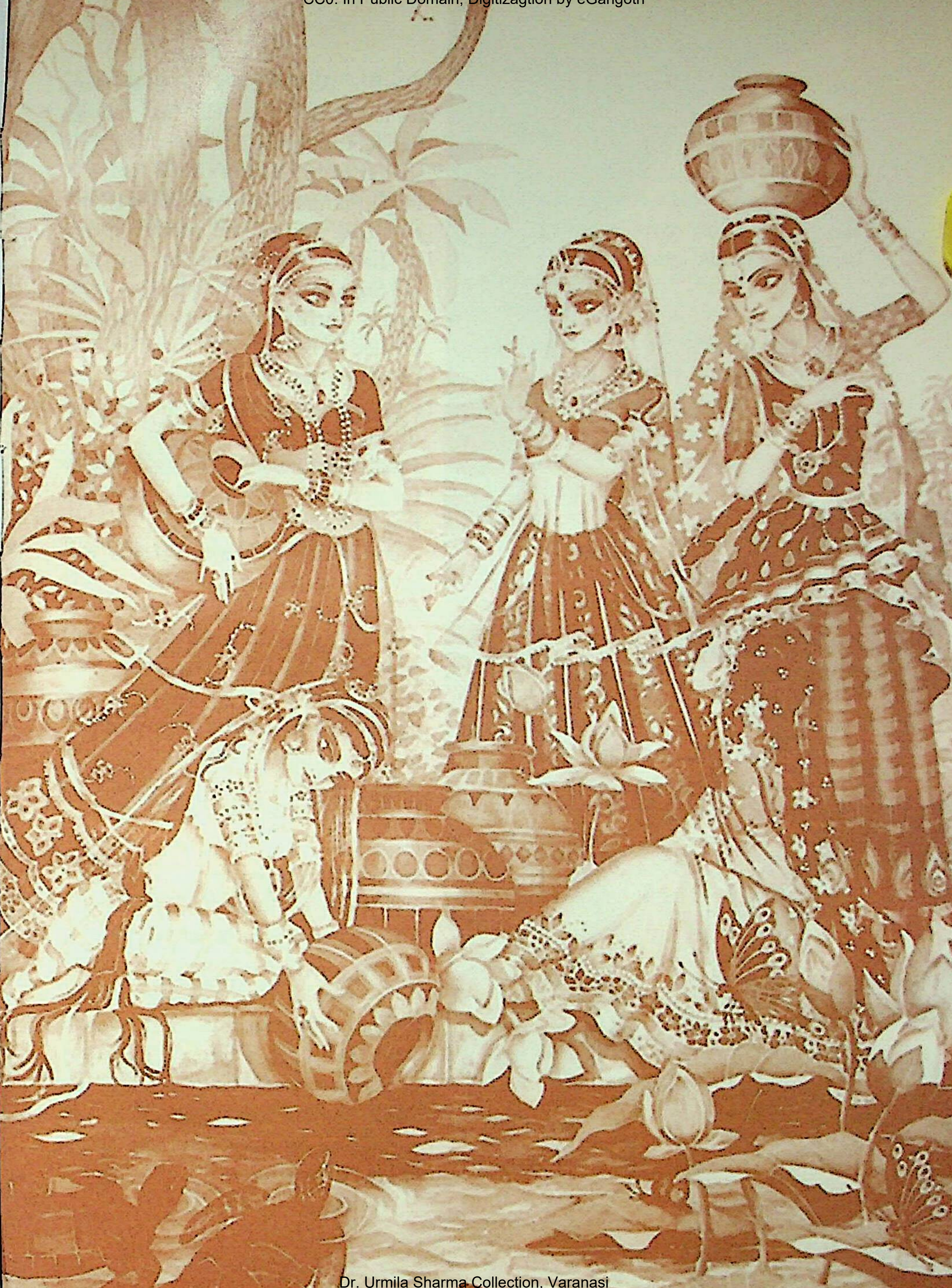
I will be unable to adequately describe what I have witnessed. I will lock it in my heart, and gaze upon it eternally. In my own grove, while cultivating that vision in my heart, I will serve constantly under the direction of the *sakhīs*.

Anaṅga-mañjarī, the younger sister of Rādhārāṇī, will bestow her mercy on me and personally show me the *dhāma*. We will go west of the Rāsa-maṇḍala to Śrī Dhīra-samīra, and then a little further to Vaṁśī-vaṭa and the bank of the Yamunā.

Rūpa-mañjarī will question my mistress, Anaṅga-mañjarī, who will reply, 'This new maidservant will be engaged under Lalitā-sakhī's direction. Her name is Kamala-mañjarī, and she is fixed in devotion to Śrī Gaurāṅga. Be merciful and give her spontaneous devotion to our Lordships.'

Hearing this, Rūpa-mañjarī will touch my body with her merciful hand, suddenly imparting to me sublime spiritual emotions and the intense desire to worship in her footsteps.

My complexion is like lightning, and my ornaments and dress sparkle like the midnight stars.



I will appear with a camphor tray in my hand, and will fall flat at her feet, begging for the unalloyed shelter of Śrī Rādhā's lotus feet.

Rūpa-mañjarī and Anaṅga-mañjarī will take me to the private grove of Lalitā, the charming mistress of Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja, who dwells within, meditating on the service of Rādhārāṇī's lotus feet.

I will pay my full obeisances at her lotus feet, and Viśākhā will explain to her my identity, 'This is one inhabitant of Navadvīpa, who wants to serve you and thereby serve the feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.'

Lalitā will be very pleased and will say to Anaṅga-mañjarī, the consort of Śeṣa, 'Give her a place beside you, and carefully arrange her desired service. Take her along when you go to perform your service, and gradually she will receive the mercy of Śrī Rādhā. Without Rādhā's mercy, how can the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa be attained?'

Hearing Lalitā's words, Anaṅga-mañjarī will take me to her grove and make me her own maidservant. She shows her affection by graciously allowing me to accompany her when she goes to serve the divine couple. While performing my service, I will catch a glimpse of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the distance. Then perhaps Śrī Rādhā will display Her mercy by giving me an order and the shade of Her lotus feet.

Remembering the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and constantly engaged in that service, I will gradually become expert. Thus I will please Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who will occasionally give me Their ornaments as a reward.

As my dream breaks, I will weep softly. And as I cross the Gaṅgā, I will look back at Śrī Pulina. Living near Īśodyāna in my private grove, I will worship Gaurāṅga, who is non-different from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Remaining fixed in my vows, I will worship Rādhā and Govinda, and I will gaze upon Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Vṛndāvana.

Remembering the feet of Anaṅga-mañjarī and the sakhīs, I will drown in love of God and in the bliss attained by my personal service to Their Lordships.

This Bhaktivinoda, servant of the servant of Lord Caitanya, is begging for residence in Navadvīpa-dhāma. I am eager for the feet of Rūpa and Raghunātha Gosvāmīs (Rūpa and Rati-mañjarīs), and from them I anxiously beg to achieve my perfect spiritual body and service.

O residents of Navadvīpa and Vṛndāvana, quickly establish me in Īśodyāna, the abode of the Lord. That is certainly within your power, for it is your place. I am simply a servant, and by assisting in your service to Their Lordships, I may attain residence in the *dhāma*.

O Navadvīpa-dhāma, give me your mercy, for without your mercy, how can anyone attain the Lord's *dhāmas*? Please do not consider whether I am fit or not, particularly in the service I have just done. I have simply extracted the essence of the instructions of Jāhnavā (Anaṅga-mañjarī) and Nityānanda Prabhu, the holder of all energies."

(*Navadvīpa-bhāva-taraṅga*)

Gaṅgā

LORD NITYĀNANDA SHOWS ŚRĪ JĪVA THE PLACE OF THE RĀSA-MAṆḌALA

tatra pulinam āsādya
pīṭhaṁ vṛndāvanātmakam
dadarśa kīrtayan kṛṣṇaṁ
śrī-gaurāṅga-mahāprabhuḥ
tatra rāsa-sthalīṁ dṛṣṭvā
sapārṣada-ramā-patih
śrī-bhāgavata-padyena
rāsa-gītaṁ cakāra saḥ
smṛtvā rasātmikāṁ līlāṁ
mahā-bhāva-daśāṁ prabhuḥ
lebhe tatra mahā-devi
puline rāsa-maṇḍape

divi dundubhayo neduḥ
babhuvuḥ puṣpa-vṛṣṭayaḥ
jagadur munayo vedān
chāndogyādi-svarūpakān
śruti-mūla-gate dīrgha-
bāhur mahāprabhuḥ
hare kṛṣṇeti saṅkrośya
cacāla jāhnavī-taṭe
bhāgīrathīṁ samuttīrya
sapārṣadaḥ śacī-sutaḥ
nāma-saṅkīrtane reme
rudra-dvīpe samantataḥ

"Śrīman Mahāprabhu Gaurasundara saw Vṛndāvana on the bank of the Gaṅgā. Along with His associates the Lord observed the Rāsa-sthalī there and started to chant the verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* relating to the *rāsa-līlā*. Oh, Mahādevī! By remembering *rāsa-līlā* at this place, Mahāprabhu entered into the state of *mahā-bhāva*. At that time *dundubhi* drums were sounded in heaven and flowers showered down. The sages were chanting the *Chāndogya* and *Veda-mantras*.

When the devotees chanted the holy name directly into the ear of the Lord, the long-armed Mahāprabhu awoke from *mahā-bhāva*, loudly chanting 'Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa!' Then Śrī Śacī-nandana along with His associates went to the bank of the Bhāgīrathī Gaṅgā, crossed it and wandered around Rudradvīpa, immersed in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*." (*Navadvīpa-dhāma-māhātmya*, *Pramāṇa-khaṇḍa* 4. 49-54)

Lord Nityānanda proceeded south to Pāraḍāṅgā, Śrī Pulina. On the way Lord Nityānanda pointed out Śrī Rāsa-maṇḍala and Dhīra-samīra. He said, "Oh, Jīva! Just see the eternal Vṛndāvana. One can always see the sweet Vṛndāvana pastimes here." Hearing the word 'Vṛndāvana', Śrī Jīva felt great ecstasy and tears of love poured from his eyes. Lord Nityānanda said, "Śrī Gaurāṅga along with His devotees would chant the songs of *rāsa-līlā* here. Just as in Vṛndāvana there is the place of the *mahā-rāsa-līlā*, in the same way at this place on the bank of the Jāhnavī the Lord and the *gopīs* perform the eternal *rāsa-līlā*. Lord Gaurāṅga along with only His most fortunate devotees could have such intimate *darśana*.
Towards the western side there is Śrī Dhīra-samīra, this is the best place for performing *bhajana*. In Vraja this Dhīra-samīra is situated on the bank of the River Yamunā. Here Dhīra-samīra is situated on the bank of the Gaṅgā. We see this river as Gaṅgā but in reality it is not, because on the western side of the Gaṅgā, the Yamunā is flowing. This beautiful forest is situated on the bank of the Yamunā, therefore Viśvambhara calls this place Vṛndāvana. You should know that all the many pastime places of the Lord that exist in Vṛndāvana, simultaneously exist here. There is no difference between Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa. Similarly, do not think that there is any difference between Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu and Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra."

Lord Nityānanda was in great ecstasy due to *mahā-bhāva*. He showed Śrī Jīva Vṛndāvana and proceeded some distance towards the north, spending the night in Rudradvīpa.

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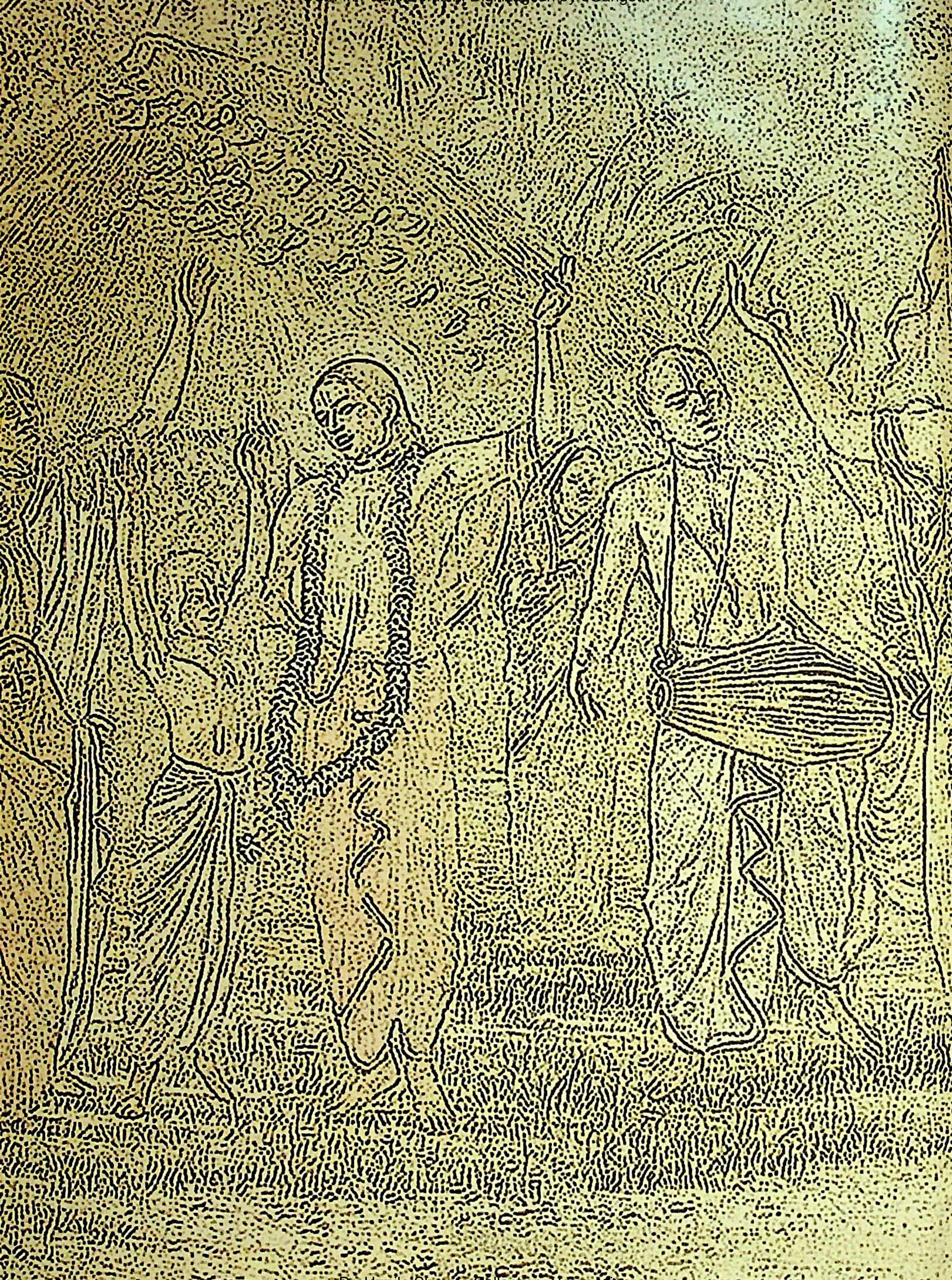

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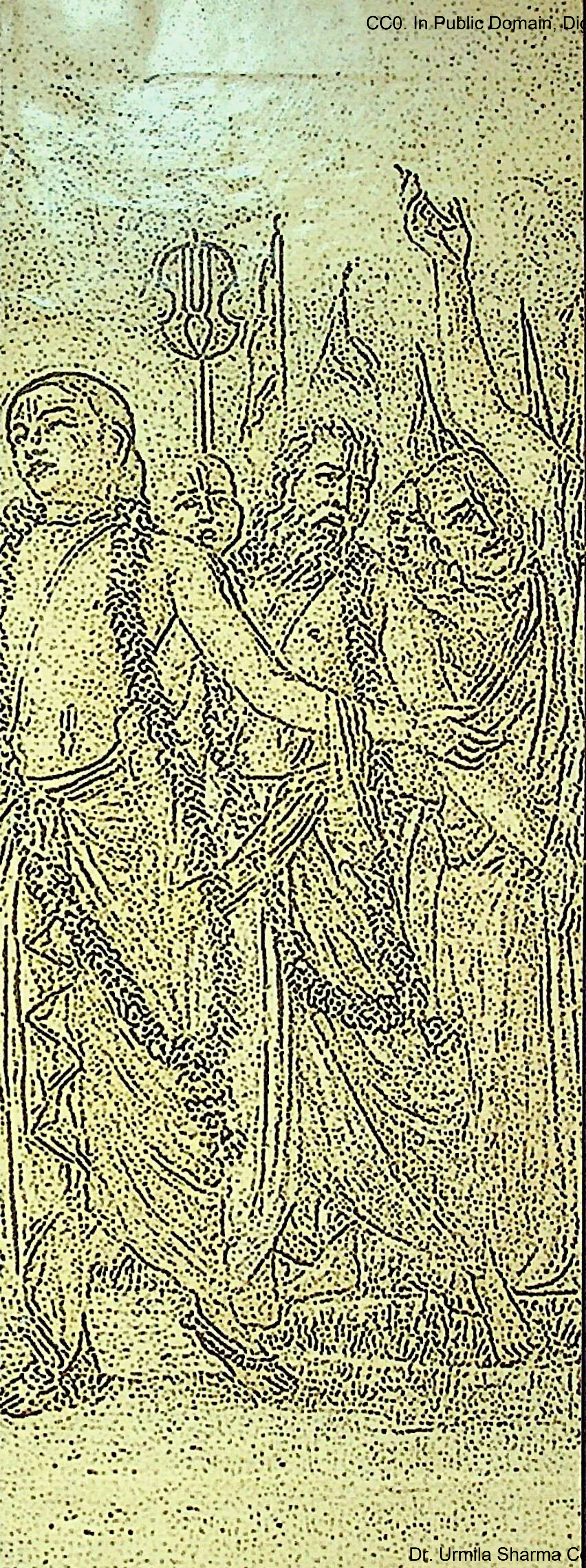

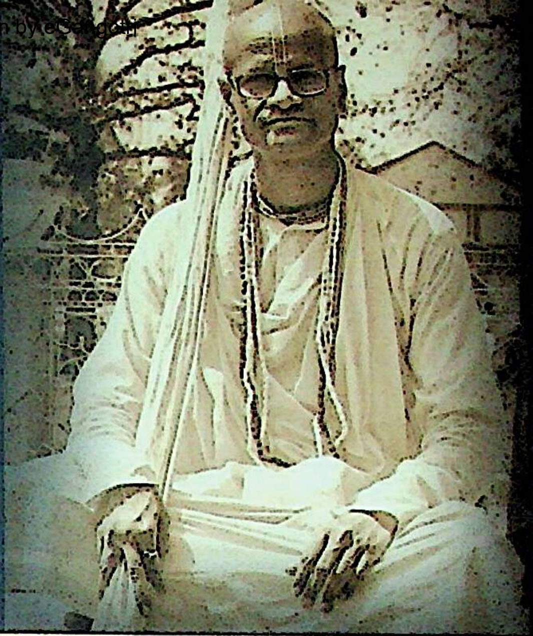

Bhakti Purusottama Swami

Born in Jagannath Puri in 1957 he became associated with ISKCON while on his second year in college. He joined the society in 1978 and was initiated by His Holiness Jayapataka Swami the following year during the Gaura Purnima festival in Sri Dham Mayapur. From then on he served in various capacities, first as sankirtan leader in Kolkata, then on the boat preaching party in Mayapur. Starting in 1983 he served four years as Temple President in Bhuvaneswar.

In 1987 he returned to Mayapur to become general manager. Under his supervision the Gita Correspondence-course program, College preaching and book distribution were develop-ed. At present Maharaja is serving in Mayapur as Co-director and one of the GBC members.

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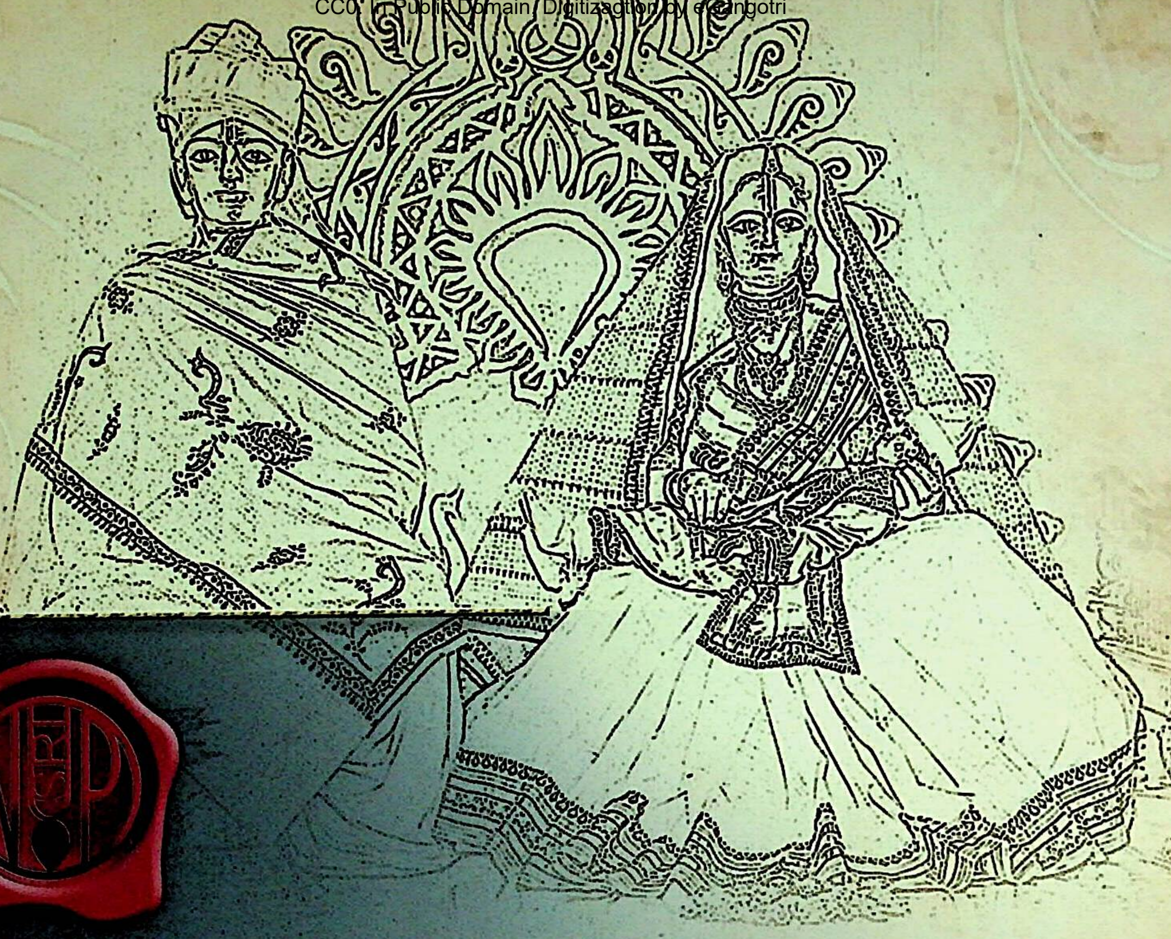

kalau saṅkīrtanārambhe   bhaviṣyāmi śacī-sutaḥ
svarṇadī-tīram āsthāya   navadvīpe janāśraye
tatra dvija-kula-śreṣṭhe   bhaviṣyāmi dvijālaye

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said, "In Kali-yuga I will descend as the son of Śacī-devī on the bank of the Gaṅgā in the populated land of Navadvīpa. I will appear in the home of a respectable brāhmaṇa at the inauguration of saṅkīrtana."

(Vāyu Purāṇa)